Out of the Deep:

Words for the Sorrowful

CHARLES KINGSLEY

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Out of the Deep:

WORDS FOR THE SORROWFUL.

FROM THE WRITINGS OF

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

"Out of the deep have I cried unto Thee, O God."

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THIS LITTLE BOOK IS

Dedicated

TO ALL TROUBLED SOULS

AND

TO THE DEAR MEMORY OF ONE

WHO PASSED THROUGH THE DEEP

INTO ETERNAL REST.

F. E. K.

June 12, 1880.

CONTENTS.

I.

PAGE

Out of the Deep of Suffering and Sorrow. 1

II.

Out of the Deep of Sin. 43

III.

Out of the Deep of Fear and Anxiety. . 69

IV.

Out of the Deep of Loneliness and Disappointment. 87

V.

Out of the Deep of Darkness and Hell. . 109

VI.

Out of the Deep of Death. 137

VII.

Prayer out of the Deep. 163

I.

OUT OF THE DEEP

OF

SUFFERING AND SORROW.

Save me, O God, for the waters are come in even unto my soul: I am come into deep waters; so that the floods run over me."—Ps. lxix. 1, 2.

I am brought into so great trouble and misery: that I go mourning all the day long."—Ps. xxxviii. 6.

The sorrows of my heart are enlarged: Oh! bring Thou me out of my distress.—Ps. xxv. 17.

The Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping: the Lord will receive my prayer.—Ps. vi. 8.

In the multitude of the sorrows which I had in my heart, Thy comforts have refreshed my soul.—Ps. xciv. 17.

I.

OUT OF THE DEEP OF SUFFERING AND SORROW.

EACH heart knows its own bitterness; each soul has its own sorrow; each man's life has its dark days of storm and tempest, when all his joys seem blown away by some sudden blast of ill-fortune, and the desire of his eyes is taken from him, and all his hopes and plans, all which he intended to do or to enjoy, are hid with blinding mist, so that he cannot see his way before him, and knows not whither to go, or whither to flee for help; when faith in God seems broken up for the moment, when he feels

no strength, no purpose, and knows not what to determine, what to do, what to believe, what to care for; when the very earth seems reeling under his feet, and the fountains of the abyss are broken up.

When that day comes, let him think of God's covenant and take heart. Is the sun's warmth perished out of the sky because the storm is cold with hail and bitter winds? Is God's love changed because we cannot feel it in our trouble? Is the sun's light perished out of the sky because the world is black with cloud and mist? Has God forgotten to give light to suffering souls, because we cannot see our way for a few short days of perplexity?

No. God's message to every sad and desolate heart on earth, is that God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all; that God

is Love, and in Him there is no cruelty at all; that God is One, and in Him there is no change at all. And therefore we can pray boldly to Him, and ask Him to deliver us in the time of our tribulation and misery; in the hour of death, whether of our own death or the death of those we love; in the day of judgment, whereof it is written—"It is God who justifieth us; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ who died, yea, rather who is risen again, who even now maketh intercession for us." To that boundless love of God, which He showed forth in the life of Christ Jesus; to that perfect and utter will to deliver us which God showed forth in the death of Christ Jesus, when the Father spared not His own Son, but gave Him freely for us; to that boundless love we may trust our-

selves, our fortunes, our families, our bodies, our souls, and the bodies and souls of those we love.

National Sermons.

To all, sooner or later, Christ comes to baptise them with fire. But do not think that the baptism of fire comes once for all to a man, in some one terrible affliction, some one awful conviction of his own sinfulness and nothingness. No; with many—and those perhaps the best people—it goes on month after month, year after year. By secret trials, chastenings, which none but they and God can understand, the Lord is cleansing them from their secret faults, and making them to understand wisdom secretly; burning out of them the chaff of self-will, and self-conceit, and vanity, and leaving only the pure gold of

righteousness. How many sweet and holy souls, who look cheerful enough before the eyes of man, yet have their secret sorrows. They carry their cross unseen all day long, and lie down to sleep on it at night; and they will carry it perhaps for years and years, and to their graves, and to the throne of Christ before they lay it down; and none but they and Christ will ever know what it was; what was the secret chastisement which God sent to make that soul better which seemed to us already too good for earth. So does the Lord watch His people, and tries them with fire, as the refiner of silver sits by his furnaces watching the melted metal till he knows that it is purged from all its dross by seeing the image of his own face reflected on it.

Town and Country Sermons.

By sufferings was Christ made perfect; and what was the best path for Jesus Christ is surely good enough for us, even though it be a rough and thorny one. Let us lie still beneath God's hand; for though His hand be heavy upon us, it is strong and safe beneath us too; and none can pluck us out of His hand, for in Him we live and move and have our being. He waits for us year after year, with patience which cannot tire; therefore, let us wait awhile for Him. With Him is plenteous redemption, and therefore redemption enough for us and for those likewise whom we love. And though we go down into hell with David, with David we shall find God there (Ps. cxxxix. 8; Ps. xvi. 10), and find that He does not leave our souls in hell, nor suffer His holy ones to see cor-

ruption. Yes, have faith in God. Nothing in thee which He has made shall see corruption; for it is a thought of God's, and no thought of His can perish. Nothing shall be purged out of thee, but thy disease; nothing shall be burnt out of thee but thy dross; and that in thee of which God said in the beginning, "Let us make man in our own image," shall be saved and live to all eternity. Yes, have faith in God, and cry to Him out of the deep, "Though Thou slay me, yet will I love Thee, for Thou lovedst me in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world."

Sermons—Good News of God.

Oh, sad hearts and suffering! Anxious and weary ones! Look to the cross of Christ. There hung your King! The King of sorrowing souls, and more, the

King of Sorrows. Ay, pain and grief, tyranny and desertion, death and hell—He has faced them one and all, and tried their strength, and taught them His, and conquered them right royally. And since He hung upon that torturing cross, sorrow is divine, godlike, as joy itself. All that man's fallen nature dreads and despises, God honoured on the cross, and took unto Himself, and blest and consecrated for ever. And now blessed are the poor, if they are poor in heart as well as purse; for Jesus was poor, and theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the hungry, if they hunger for righteousness as well as food; for Jesus hungered, and they shall be filled. Blessed are those who mourn, if they mourn not only for their sorrows, but for their sins; for Jesus mourned for our sins,

and on the cross He was made sin for us, who knew no sin; and they shall be comforted. Blessed are those who are ashamed of themselves, and hate themselves, and humble themselves before God, for on the cross Jesus humbled Himself; and they shall be exalted. Blessed are the forsaken and despised; did not all men forsake Jesus in His hour of need? And why not thee, too, thou poor deserted one? Shall the disciple be above his Master? No. Every one that is perfect must be as his Master.

National Sermons.

Never let us get into the common trick of calling unbelief Resignation; of asking, and then because we have not faith to believe, putting in a "Thy will be done" at the end. Let us make God's will our will, and so say, "Thy will be done."

There is a false as well as a true and holy resignation. When the sorrow is come or coming, or necessary apparently for others' good, let us say with our Master in the Agony, "Not what we will, but what Thou wilt!" But up to that point, let us pray boldly.

Letters and Memories of Charles Kingsley.

Christianity heightens as well as deepens the human as well as the divine affections. I am happy; for the less hope, the more faith. God knows what is best for us. I am sure we do not. Continual resignation, I begin to find, is the secret of continual strength. "Daily dying," as Bœhmen interprets it, "is the path of daily living."

Letters and Memories.

In all the trials of life, there is still some way of escape to be found if a man goes to the right place to look for it; and, if not of escape, still of compensation. I speak of that which I know. Of my own comfort I will not speak—of the path by which I attained it I will. It was simply by not struggling, doing my work vigorously where God had put me, and believing firmly that His promises had a real, not a mere metaphorical meaning, and that Psalms x., xxvii., xxxiv., xxxvii., cvii., cxii., cxxiii., cxxvi., cxlvi., are as practically true for us as they were for the Jews of old, and that it is the faithlessness of this day which prevents men from accepting God's promises in their literal sense with simple childlike faith.

Letters and Memories.

Do not fear the clouds and storm and rain; look at the bow in the cloud, in the very rain itself. That is a sign that the sun, though you cannot see it, is shining still—that up above, beyond the cloud, is still sunlight and warmth and cloudless blue sky. Believe in God's covenant. Believe that the sun will conquer the clouds, warmth will conquer cold, calm will conquer storm, fair will conquer foul, light will conquer darkness, joy will conquer sorrow, life conquer death, love conquer destruction and the devouring floods; because God is light, God is love, God is life, God is peace and joy eternal, God is without change, and labours to give life and joy and peace to man and beast and all created things. This was the meaning of the rainbow. It is a witness that

God, who made the world, is the friend and preserver of man; that His promises are like the everlasting sunshine which is above the clouds, without spot or fading, without variableness or shadow of turning.

National Sermons.

If I did not believe in a special Providence, in a perpetual education of men by evil as well as good, by small things as well as great—if I did not believe that —I could believe nothing.

Letters and Memories.

Let us be content; we do not know what is good for us, and God does.

It is true, and you will find it true (though God knows it is a difficult lesson enough to learn) that there should be no greater comfort to Christian people than to be made like Christ by suffering patiently

not only the hard work of every-day life, but sorrows, troubles, and sicknesses, and all our heavenly Father's corrections, whensoever, by any manner of adversity, it shall please His gracious goodness to visit them. For Christ Himself went not up to joy, but first He suffered pain. He entered not into His glory before He was crucified. Therefore those words which we read in the Visitation of the Sick about this matter are not mere kind words, meant to give comfort for the moment. They are truth and fact and sound philosophy. They are as true for the young lad in health and spirits as for the old folks crawling towards their graves. It is true that sickness and all sorts of troubles are sent to correct and amend in us whatsoever doth offend the eye of our heavenly Father.

It is true, and you will find it true, that whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.

All Saints' Day Sermons.

"That ye through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope," says St. Paul; and, again, "Let patience have her perfect work." But where are we to get patience? God knows it is hard in such a world as this for poor creatures to be always patient. But faith can breed patience, though patience cannot breed itself; and faith in whom? Faith in our Father in Heaven, even in Almighty God Himself. He calls Himself the "God of Patience and Consolation." Pray for His Holy Spirit, and He will make you patient; pray for His Holy Spirit, and He will console and comfort you. He has promised that Spirit of His—the Com-

forter—the Spirit of Love, Trust, and Patience—to as many as ask Him. Ask Him at His Holy Table to make you patient; ask Him to change your wills into the likeness of His will. Then will your eyes be opened; then will you see in the Scriptures a sure promise of hope, and glory, and redemption for yourself and all the world; then you will see in the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's body and blood a sure sign and warrant, handed down from hand to hand, from age to age, from year to year, from father to son, that His promises shall be fulfilled—that patience shall have her perfect work—that hope shall become a reality—that not one of the Lord's words shall fail or pass away till all be fulfilled.

National Sermons.

God means some good to you by prostrating you—perhaps He means by giving you blessings almost without your asking, to show you how little avails morbid sensitiveness or self-tormenting struggles. Synthetical minds are subject to this self-torture. Such a period in your life is the time to become again a little child! I do not mean a re-regeneration, but a permitting of the mind to assume that tone of calm wonder and infantile trust, which will allow all the innate principles within—all God-bestowed graces which have been bruised and bowed by the tempest, to blossom gently upwards again, in "the clear shining after rain"—a breathing time in life—not too much retrospection or self-examination — keep that for the healthy and vigorous hours of the mind—but a silent basking in the

light of God's presence—a time for faith, more than for labour; for general and unexpressed, more than for particular or earnest prayer.

Letters and Memories.

Sorrow, though dreary, is not barren. Nothing need be barren to those who view all things in their real light, as links in the great chain of progression, both for themselves and for the universe. To us, all Time should seem so full of life; every moment the grave and the father of unnumbered events and designs in heaven and earth, revealing the mind of our God Himself—all things moving smoothly and surely, in spite of apparent checks and disappointments, towards the appointed End!

Letters and Memories.

In all the chances and changes of this mortal life, it is our one comfort to believe firmly and actively in the changeless kingdom, and in the changeless King. This alone will give us calm, patience, faith, and hope, though the heavens and the earth be shaken around us. For so only shall we see that the kingdom, of which we are citizens, is a kingdom of light, and not of darkness; of truth, and not of falsehood; of freedom, and not of slavery; of bounty and mercy, and not of wrath and fear; that we live and move and have our being, not in a "Deus quidam deceptor," who grudges His children wisdom, but in a Father of Light, from whom comes every good and perfect gift; who willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. In His kingdom

we are; and in the King whom He has set over it we can have most perfect trust. For us that King stooped from heaven to earth; for us He was born, for us He toiled, for us He suffered, for us He died, for us He arose again, for us He sits for ever at God's right hand. And can we not trust Him? Let Him do what He will. Let Him lead us whither He will. Wheresoever He leads must be the way of truth and life. Whatsoever He does, must be in harmony with that infinite love which He displayed for us upon the Cross. Whatsoever He does must be in harmony with that eternal purpose by which He reveals to men God their Father. Therefore, though the heaven and the earth be shaken around us, we will trust in Him; for we know that He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

If we believe that God is educating men, the when, the where, and the how, are not only unimportant, but considering Who is the teacher, unfathomable to us; and it is enough to be able to believe that the Lord of all things is influencing us through all things.

Essays.

Provided we attain at last to the truly heroic and divine life, which is the life of virtue, it will matter little to us by what strange and weary ways, or through what painful and humiliating processes, we have arrived thither. If God has loved us, if God will receive us, then let us submit loyally and humbly to His law—"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."

All Saints' Day Sermons.

I believe that the wisest plan of bearing sorrow is sometimes not to try to bear it—as long as one is not crippled for one's every-day duties—but to give way to sorrow, utterly and freely. Perhaps sorrow is sent that we *may* give way to it, and, in drinking the cup to the dregs, find some medicine in it itself which we should not find if we began doctoring ourselves, or letting others doctor us. If we say simply, "I am wretched, I ought to be wretched;" then we shall perhaps hear a voice, "Who made thee wretched but God? Then what can He mean but thy good?" And if the heart answers impatiently, "My good? I don't want it, I want my love!" perhaps the voice may answer, "Then thou shalt have both in time."

Letters and Memories.

After all, the problem of life is not a difficult one, for it solves itself—so very soon at best—by death. Do what is right, the best way you can, and wait to the end to *know*. . . .

If, in spite of wars, and fevers, and accidents, and the strokes of chance, this world be green and fair, what must the coming world be like? Let us comfort ourselves as St. Paul did (in infinitely worse times), that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed. It is not fair to quote one text about the creation groaning and travailing without the other, that it will not groan and travail long. Would the mother who has groaned and travailed and brought forth children—would she give up those children for the sake of not

having had that pain? Then believe that the day will come when the world, and every human being in it who has really groaned and travailed, would not give up its past pangs for the sake of its then present perfection, but will look back on this life, as the mother does on past pain, with glory and joy.

Letters and Memories.

I write to you because every expression of human sympathy brings some little comfort, if it be only to remind such as you that you are not alone in the world. I know nothing can make up for such a loss as yours.* But you will still have love on earth all round you; and *his* love is not dead. It lives still in the next world for you, and perhaps with you. For

* Death of a Husband.

why should not those who are gone, if they are gone to their Lord, be actually nearer us, not further from us, in the heavenly world, praying for us, and it may be, influencing and guiding us in a hundred ways, of which we in our prison-house of mortality cannot dream?

Yes, do not be afraid to believe that he whom you have loved is still near you, and you near him, and both of you near God, who died on the Cross for you. That is all I can say. But what comfort there is in it, if one can give up one's heart to believe it!

Letters and Memories.

. . . All that I can say about the text, Matt. xxii. 30 [of Marriage in the world to come], is that it has nought to do with me and my wife. I know that

if immortality is to include in my case identity of person, I shall feel for her for ever what I feel now. That feeling may be developed in ways which I do not expect; it may have provided for it forms of expression very different from any which are among the holiest sacraments of life. Of that I take no care. The union I believe to be eternal as my own soul, and I leave all in the hands of a good God.

Is not marriage the mere approximation to a unity that shall be perfect in heaven? And shall we not be reunited in heaven by that still deeper tie? Surely if on earth Christ the Lord has loved—some more than others;—why should not we do the same in heaven, and yet love all?

Do I thus seem to undervalue earthly bliss? No! I enhance it when I make it

the sacrament of a higher union! Will not this thought give more exquisite delight; will it not tear off the thorn from every rose; and sweeten every nectar cup to perfect security of blessedness in this life, to feel that there is more in store for us —that all expressions of love here, are but dim shadows of a union which will be perfect if we but work here, so as to work out our own salvation?

Letters and Memories.

. . . That is an awful feeling of having the roots which connect one with the last generation seemingly torn up, and having to say, "Now I am the root, I stand self-supported, with no other older stature to rest on." * But this one must believe that God is the God of Abraham, and that

* Death of a Parent.

all live to Him, and that we are no more isolated and self-supported than when we were children on our mother's bosom.

Letters and Memories.

Believe that those who are gone are nearer us than ever; and that if, as I surely believe, they do sorrow over the mishaps and misdeeds of those whom they leave behind, they do not sorrow in vain. Their sympathy is a further education for them, and a pledge, too, of help, and, I believe, of final deliverance for those on whom they look down in love.

Letters and Memories.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

They rest from their labours. All their struggles, disappointments, failures, back-

slidings, which made them unhappy here, because they could not perfectly do the will of God, are past and over for ever. But their works follow them. The good which they did on earth—that is not past and over. It cannot die. It lives and grows for ever, following on in their path long after they are dead, and bearing fruit unto everlasting life, not only in them, but in men whom they never saw, and in generations yet unborn.

Good News of God—Sermons.

"A little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father," said our Lord when speaking of His own death to His sorrowing disciples. And if it be so with Christ, then is it so with those who are Christ's, with those whom

we love. They are the partakers of His death, therefore they are the partakers of His resurrection. Let us believe that blessed news in all its fulness, and be at peace. A little while and we see them, and again a little while and we do not see them. But why? Because they are gone to the Father—to the source and fount of all life and power, all light and love, that they may gain life from His life, power from His power, light from His light, love from His love—and surely not for nought. Surely not for nought. For, if they were like Christ on earth, and did not use their powers for themselves alone, if they are to be like Christ when they shall see Him as He is, the more surely will they not use their powers for themselves, but as Christ uses His, for

those they love? Surely, like Christ they may come and go even now unseen. Like Christ they may breathe upon our restless hearts and say, "Peace be unto you." And not in vain—for what they did for us when they were yet on earth they can do more fully now that they are in heaven. They may seem to have left us, and we may weep and lament. But the day will come when the veil shall be taken from our eyes and we shall see them as they are—with Christ and in Christ for ever—and remember no more our anguish, for joy that another human being has entered into that one true, real, and eternal world, wherein is neither disease, disorder, change, decay, nor death, for it is none other than the bosom of the Father.

All Saints-Day Sermons.

And what if earthly love seems so delicious that all change in it would seem a change for the worse, shall we repine? What does reason (and faith, which is reason exercised on the invisible) require of us, but to conclude that if there is change, there will be something better there?

Letters and Memories.

What is the true everlasting life—the life of God and Christ—but a life of love, a life of perfect active, self-sacrificing goodness, which is the one only true life for all rational beings, whether on earth or in heaven—in heaven as well as on earth. Form your own notions as you will about angels and saints in heaven, (for every one must have some notions about them,) and try to picture to yourself what the souls of those whom you have loved and lost are

doing in the other world; but bear this in mind, that if the saints in heaven live the everlasting life, they must be living a life of usefulness, of love, and of good works.

There are those who believe what we are too apt to forget, and that is that the everlasting life cannot be a selfish and idle life, spent only in being happy oneself. They believe that the saints in heaven are not idle—that they are eternally helping mankind, doing all sorts of good offices for those souls who need them. I cannot see why they should not be right. For if the saints' delight was to do good on earth, much more will it be to do good in heaven. If they helped poor sufferers, if they comforted the afflicted here on earth, much more will they be willing to help and comfort them, now that they are in the full power, the full free-

dom, the full love and zeal of the everlasting life. If their hearts were warmed and softened by the fire of God's love here, how much more there! If they lived God's life of love here, how much more there, before the throne of God and the face of Christ!

And if any one shall say that the souls of good men in heaven cannot help us who are here on earth, I answer—When did they ascend into heaven to find out that? If they had ever been there, let us be sure they would have had better news to bring home than this, that those whom we have honoured and loved on earth have lost the power which they used once to have of comforting us who are struggling below.

No, we will believe—what every one who loses a beloved friend comes sooner or later to believe—that those whom we have hon-

oured and loved, though taken from our eyes, are near to our spirits; that they still fight for us under the banner of their Master, Christ, and still work for us by virtue of His life of love, which they live in Him and by Him for ever.

Pray to them, indeed, we need not, as if they would help us out of any self-will of their own. They do God's will, and not their own; and go on God's errands, and not their own. If we pray to God our Father Himself, that is enough for us. And what shall we pray? "Father, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Good News of God, Sermons.

Is not that one thought that our beloved ones sleep in Christ Jesus enough? They sleep in Jesus, and therefore in infinite tenderness, sympathy, care, and love. They

sleep in Jesus; and He is the Life, and therefore they sleep in Life. They sleep in Jesus; and He is the Light, and therefore they sleep in Light. They sleep in Jesus; and He is Love, and therefore they sleep in Love. And what better? This is better—that they who sleep in Jesus must surely awaken. For, as it is written, His is a quickening, awakening, life-giving Spirit, and so to sleep in Him is to sleep in the very fount and core of life and power. If from Jesus all our powers and talents come here on earth, surely He will give us more and nobler, when we sleep in Him, and wake in Him to a risen and eternal life. And more, it is written that them that sleep in Jesus will He bring with Him. At the last day we shall see face to face those we loved—and before

that—oh! doubt it not. Oftentimes when Christ draws near our spirits He comes not alone, but loving souls, souls whom we knew in the flesh on earth, bear up His train, and hover near our hearts and join their whispers to the voice and inspiration of Him who loved us, and who will guide us with counsel here, and after that receive us into glory, where we shall meet those beloved ones—not as our forefathers dreamed, as meagre shadows flitting through dreary and formless chaos—but as we knew them once—the body of the flesh alone put off, but the real body, the spiritual body to which flesh and blood was but a husk and shell, living and loving more fully, more utterly, than even before, because it is in Christ who is the fount of life, and freed in Him for ever from hell and death.

And if you wish for a sign that this is so, come to holy communion and take the bread and wine as a sign that your bodies and theirs, your souls and theirs, are fed from the same fount of everlasting life—the dead and risen and ever living body of Christ Jesus, which He has given to be the life of the world.

MSS. Sermons.

We know that afflictions do come—terrible bereavements, sorrows sad and strange. There they are, God help us all. But from whom do they come? Who is Lord of life and death? Who is Lord of joy and sorrow? Is not that the question of all questions? And is not the answer the most essential of all answers? It is the Holy Spirit of God; the Spirit who proceedeth from the Father and the

Son; the Spirit of the Father who so loved the world, that He spared not His only begotten Son; the Spirit of the Son who so loved the world that He stooped to die for it upon the Cross; the Spirit who is the Comforter, and says, "I have seen thy ways and will heal thee, I will lead thee also, and restore comforts to thee and to thy mourners. I speak peace to him that is near and to him that is afar off, saith the Lord; and I will heal him." Is not that the most blessed news, that He who takes away, is the very same as He who gives? That He who afflicts is the very same as He who comforts?

All Saints-Day Sermons.

Oh! blessed news, that God Himself is the Comforter. Blessed news, that He who strikes will also heal; that He who gives

the cup of sorrow will also give the strength to drink it. Blessed news, that chastisement is not punishment, but the education of a Father. Blessed news, that our whole duty is the duty of a child—of the Son who said in His agony, Father, not my will, but Thine be done. Blessed news, that our Comforter is the Spirit who comforted Christ the Son Himself; who proceeds both from the Father and the Son, and who will tell us that in Christ we are really and literally the children of God, who may cry to Him in our extreme need, "Father," with full understanding of all that that royal word contains.

All Saints-Day Sermons.

II.

OUT OF THE DEEP

OF

SIN.

Innumerable troubles are come about me. My sins have taken such hold upon me, that I am not able to look up ; yea, they are more in number than the hairs of my head, and my heart hath failed me.—Ps. xl. 15.

I acknowledge my faults, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight.—Ps. li. 3.

I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord ; and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin.—Ps. xxxii. 6.

Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is purged.—Ps. xxxii. 1.

There is forgiveness with Thee, therefore shalt Thou be feared.—Ps. cxxx. 1.

II.

OUT OF THE DEEP OF SIN.

God is not against you but for you, in all the struggles of life; He wants you to get through safe; wants you to succeed; wants you to conquer; and He will hear your cry out of the deep and help you. And therefore when you find yourselves wrong, utterly wrong, do not cry to this man or that man, "Do *you* help me; do you set me a little more right before God comes, and finds me in the wrong and punishes me." Cry to

God Himself, to Christ Himself; ask Him to lift you up; ask Him to set you right. Do not be like St. Peter before his conversion, and cry, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord; wait a little till I have risen up, and washed off my stains, and made myself somewhat fit to be seen."—No. Cry, "Come quickly, O Lord—at once—just because I am a sinful man; just because I am sore let and hindered in running my race by my own sins and wickedness; because I am lazy and stupid; because I am perverse and vicious, *therefore* raise up Thy power, and come to me, Thy miserable creature, Thy lost child, and with Thy great might succour me. Lift me up, because I have fallen very low; deliver me, for I have plunged out of Thy sound and safe highway into deep mire where

no ground is. Help myself I cannot, and if Thou help me not, I am undone."

Do so. Pray so. Let your sins and wickedness be to you not a reason for hiding from Christ, who stands by; but a reason, the reason of all reasons, for crying to Christ, who stands by. And then, whether He delivers you by gentle means or by sharp ones, deliver you He will, and set your feet on firm ground, and order your goings, that you may run with patience the race which is set before you along the road of life and the pathway of God's commandments wherein there is no death.

Good News of God, Sermons.

What are we to do when our sins bring us, as they certainly will some day bring us, into trouble, but to open our eyes

and see that the only thing for men and women whom God has made is to obey Him? How can we prosper by doing anything else? It is ill fighting against God. But some one may say, "I know I have sinned, and I do wish and long to obey God, but I am so weak, and my sins have so entangled me, that I cannot obey God. I long to do so. I feel and know, when I look back, that all my sin and shame and unhappiness come from being proud and self-willed and determined to have my own way. But I *cannot* mend."

Do not despair, poor soul! I had a thousand times sooner hear you say that you cannot mend than that you can. For those who really feel they cannot mend —those who are really weary and worn out with the burden of their sins—those

who are tired out with their own wilfulness, and feel ready to lie down and die, like a spent horse, and say, "God take me away, no matter to what place; I am not fit to live here on earth, a shame and a torment to myself day and night"—those who are in that state of mind are very near—very near—finding out glorious news.

God knows as well as you what you have to struggle against; ay, a thousand times better. He knows—What does He not know? Therefore pray to Him. Cry to Him to make your will like His own will, that you may love what He loves, hate what He hates, and do what He wishes you to do; and you will surely find it come true that those who try to mend, and yet know that they cannot mend themselves, God will mend them.

National Sermons.

Sin, *ἁμαρτία*, is literally, as it signifies, the missing of a mark; and that each miss brings a penalty, or rather is itself the penalty, is to me the best of news, and gives me hope for myself and for every human being, past, present, and future, for it makes me look on them all as children under a paternal education, who are being taught to become aware of, and use their own powers in God's house, the universe, and for God's work in it; and in proportion as they learn to do that, they attain salvation, *σωτηρία*, literally *health* and *wholeness* of spirit, which is, like the health of the body, its own reward.

Letters and Memories.

If in sorrow the thought strikes you that you are punished for your sins, mourn for them, but not for the happiness they

have prevented. Rather thank God that He has stopped you in time, and remember His promises of restoring us if we profit by His chastisement.

Letters and Memories.

Ah! how many a poor, foolish creature, in misery and shame, with guilty conscience and sad heart, tries to forget his sin, to forget his sorrow; but he cannot. He is sick and tired of sin. He is miserable, and he hardly knows why. There is a longing, and craving, and hunger at his heart after something better. Then he begins to remember his Heavenly Father's house. Old words, which he learnt in childhood; good old words out of his Catechism and Bible, start up strangely in his mind. He had forgotten them, laughed at them perhaps in his

wild days. But now they come up, he does not know where from, like beautiful ghosts gliding in. And he is ashamed of them. They reproach him, the dear old lessons; and at last he says, "Would God that I were a little child again; once more an innocent little child at my mother's knee! Perhaps I have been a fool; and the old Sunday books were right after all. At least, I am miserable! I thought I was my own master, but perhaps He about whom I used to read in the old Sunday books is my Master after all. At least, I am not my own master; *I am a slave.* Perhaps I have been fighting against Him, against the Lord God, all this time, and now He has shown me that He is the stronger of the two."

And when the Lord has drawn a man thus far, does He stop? Not so. He does not leave His work half done. If the work is half done, it is that *we* stop, not that He stops. Whoever comes to Him, however confusedly, or clumsily, or even lazily they may come, He will in no wise cast out. He may afflict them still more to cure that confusion and laziness; but He is a physician who never sends a patient away, or keeps him waiting for a single hour.

National Sermons.

The blessed St. Augustine found he could never conquer his own sins by arguing with himself, or by any other means, till he got to know God, and to see that God was the Lord. And when his spirit was utterly broken, when he saw himself to have been a fool and blind all along—then

the old words which he learned at his mother's knee came up to his mind, and he knew that God had been watching, guiding him, letting him go wrong only to show him the folly of going wrong, caring for him, bearing with him, pleading with his conscience, alluring him back to the only true happiness, as a loving father will a rebellious and self-willed child; and he became a changed man. To that blessed state may God of His great mercy bring us in His own good time. And if He does bring us to it, it is little matter whether He brings us to it through joy or through sorrow, through honour or through shame, through the Garden of Eden or through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. For what matter how bitter the medicine is if it does but save our lives? *National Sermons.*

. . . Your sense of sin is not fanaticism; it is, I suppose, simple consciousness of fact. As for helping you to Christ, I do not believe *I* can one inch. I can see no hope but in prayer, in going to Him yourself, and saying: "Lord, if Thou art there, if Thou art at all, if this be not all a lie, fulfil Thy reputed promises, and give me peace and the sense of forgiveness, and the feeling that, bad as I may be, Thou lovest me still, seeing all, understanding all, and therefore making allowance for all!"

I have had to do that in past days; to challenge Him through outer darkness and the silence of night, till I almost expected that He would vindicate His own honour by appearing visibly, as He did to St. Paul and St. John; but He answered in

the still, small voice only; yet that was enough.

Letters and Memories.

. . . Dear friend, the secret of life for you and for me is to lay our purposes and our characters continually before Him who made them, and cry, "Do *Thou* purge me, and so alone shall I be clean. Thou requirest truth in the inward parts. Thou wilt make me to understand wisdom secretly." What more rational belief? For surely if there be any God, and He made us at first, He who makes can also mend His own work if it gets out of gear. What more miraculous in the doctrines of regeneration and renewal than in the mere fact of creation?

Letters and Memories.

As for the sins of youth, what says the 130th Psalm? If Thou, Lord, were extreme to mark what is done amiss, who could abide it? But there is mercy with Him, therefore shall He be feared. And how to fear God I know not better than by working on at the special work which He has given us, trusting to Him to make it of use to His creatures, if He needs us. Therefore fret not nor be of doubtful mind, but just do the duty which lies nearest.

Letters and Memories.

Yes; this is our comfort, this is our hope; Christ, the Great Healer, the Great Physician, can deliver us, and will deliver us from the remains of our old sins, the consequences of our own follies. Not, indeed, at once or by miracles, but by slow education. Better, indeed, for us

perhaps that He should not cure us at once, lest we should fancy that sin was a light thing which we could throw off whenever we chose; and not that it is an inward disease, corroding and corrupting, the wages whereof are death. And so it is that because Christ loves us He hates our sins, and cannot abide or endure them, but will punish them, and is merciful and loving in punishing as long as a tincture or remnant of sin is left in us. Therefore let us put ourselves into the hands of Christ, the Great Physician, and ask Him to heal our wounded souls, and purge our corrupted souls, and leave to Him the choice of how He will do it. Let us be content to be punished and chastised. Let Him deal with us, if He sees fit, as He dealt

with David of old, when He forgave the sin, and yet punished it by the death of his child. Let Him do what He will by us, provided He does—what He will do —make us good men.

All Saints-Day Sermons.

My belief is that God will punish (has He not punished already somewhat?) every wrong thing I ever did unless I repent —that is, change my behaviour therein; and that His lightest blow is hard enough to break bone and marrow. But as for saying of any human being whom I ever saw on earth that there is no hope for them; that if ever, under the bitter smart of just punishment, they opened their eyes to their folly and altered their mind, even then God would not forgive them; as for saying that, I will not for all the world

and the rulers thereof. I never saw a man in whom there was not some good, and I believe that God sees that good far more clearly, and loves it far more deeply, than I can, because He Himself put it there, and therefore it is reasonable to believe that He will educate and strengthen that good, and chastise the holder of it till he obeys it, and loves it, and gives himself up to it; and that the said holder will find such chastisement terrible enough if he is unruly and stubborn I doubt not, and so much the better for him. Beyond this I cannot say.

Letters and Memories.

If a man really believed himself to be a son, under a father's education, he would believe everything which happened to be a part of that education. And such a

man, I believe, so praying and so working, keeping before him as his lode-star—"Our Father, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;" and asking even for his daily bread for that purpose and no other, would find selfishness and self-seeking die out of him, and active benevolence grow up in him. He would find past sorrows and falls turned unexpectedly to practical use for his own and other's good; and discover to his delight, that his Father had been educating him, while he fancied he was educating himself; and he would neither have leisure nor need to torment himself about the motives of his actions, but simply whatever his hand found to do, do it with all his might.

Letters and Memories.

Let us forward. God leads us; though blind, shall we be afraid to follow? I do not see my way; I do not care to; but I know that He sees His way, and that I see Him, and I cannot believe that in spite of all one's sins He will forget His gracious promises. "They had an eye unto Him, and were lightened. They that put their trust in Him shall not be ashamed."

I know the miserable, peevish, lazy, conceited, faithless, prayerless wretch that I am, but I know this too, that One is guiding me, and driving me when I would not be guided, who will make me, and has made me, go His way, and do His work, by fair means or by foul.

Letters and Memories.

Be of good cheer. WHEN the wicked man turneth from his wickedness (then,

there and then) he shall save his soul *alive*—and all his sin and wickedness shall not be mentioned unto him. What your "measure" of guilt (if there can be a measure of the incommensurable spiritual) may be, I know not. But this I know that as long as you keep the sense of guilt alive in your own mind you will remain justified in God's mind; as long as you set your sins before your face He will set them behind His back.

Letters and Memories.

This is the Gospel, the good news for fallen men, that there is a Man in the midst of the throne of God to whom all power is given in heaven and earth; that the fate of the world and all that is therein, the fate of sun and stars, the fate of kings and nations, the fate of every

publican and harlot, heathen and outcast, the fate of all who are in death and hell, depend alike upon the sacred heart of Jesus; the heart which grieved at the tomb of Lazarus, His friend; the heart which wept over Jerusalem; the heart which said to the blessed Magdalene, the woman that was a sinner, "Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee"; the heart that yearns over every sinful and wandering soul all over the earth of God, crying to all, "Why will ye die? Have I any pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord, and not rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live?" "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest."

National Sermons.

This is the message of the blessed sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, which tells you that in spite of all your daily sins and failings, you can still look up to God as your Father; to the Lord Jesus as your life; to the Holy Spirit as your guide and your inspirer; that though you be a prodigal son, your Father's house is still open to you; your Father's eternal love ready to meet you afar off the moment that you cry from your heart—"Father, I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called Thy child;" and that you must be converted and turn back to God your Father not merely once for all, but weekly, daily, hourly, as often as you forget and disobey Him. This is the message of the blessed sacrament—that though you cannot come to it trusting

in your own righteousness, you can come trusting in His manifold and great mercies; that though you are not worthy to gather up the crumbs under His table, yet He is the same Lord whose property is ever to have mercy, and He will grant that your souls shall be washed in Christ's most precious blood, that you may dwell in Him, and He in you, for ever.

National Sermons.

Members of Christ, children of God, heirs of the kingdom of heaven, heirs of a Hope undying, pure, that will never fade away, you have a right given you by the promise and oath of Almighty God Himself, to hope for yourselves, for your neighbours, for this poor distracted world for ever and ever: a right to believe that there is an everlasting

day of justice, and peace, and happiness in store for the whole world, and that you, if you will, may have your share in that glorious sunrise which shall never set again. Go to the Scriptures, and there read the promises of God, the grounds of your just hope, for all heaven and earth. "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." How dare we, who call ourselves Christians, who have been baptized into His name, who have tasted of His mercy, who have the might of His love, the converting and renewing power of His Spirit—how dare we doubt that He will take away the sins of the world? Ay, step by step, nation by nation, year by year, the Lord shall conquer; for He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. . . . He has promised

to take away the sins of the world, and He is God, and cannot lie.

National Sermons.

III.

OUT OF THE DEEP
OF
FEAR AND ANXIETY.

My heart is disquieted within me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me.—Ps. lv. 4.

Thou hast proved and visited my heart in the night season—Ps. xvii. 3.

Nevertheless though I am sometimes afraid, yet put I my trust in Thee.—Ps. lv. 3.

The Lord is my light and my salvation ; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life ; of whom shall I be afraid?—Ps. xxvii. 1.

I sought the Lord and He heard me and delivered me from all my fear.—Ps. xxxiv. 4.

III.

OUT OF THE DEEP
OF
FEAR AND ANXIETY.

Who is there who has not at times said to himself—"God is so holy, so pure and glorious; while I am so unjust, and unclean, and mean! and God is so great and powerful; while I am so small and weak! What shall I do? Does not God hate and despise me? Will He not take from me all I love best? Will He not hurl me into endless torment when I die? How can I escape from Him? Wretched man that I am, I cannot escape from Him! How then

can I turn away His hate? How can I make Him change His mind? How can I soothe and appease Him? What shall I do to escape Him?"

Did you ever have such thoughts? And did you ever find those thoughts, that slavish terror of God's wrath, that dread of hell make you better men? I never did. Unless you go beyond them—as far beyond them as heaven is beyond hell, as far above them as a free son is above a miserable crouching slave, they will do you more harm than good. This spirit of bondage, this slavish terror, instead of bringing us nearer to God, only drives us farther from Him. It does not make us hate what is wrong, it only makes us dread the punishment of it.

How then shall we escape the terror

and misery of an evil conscience, and rise out of our sins? Believe the warrant of your baptism. Your baptism says to you —"God is your Father, He does not hate you though you be the greatest sinner on earth. He loves you, for you are His child, and He willeth not the death of a sinner, but that all should come and be saved. He hateth nothing that He has made." This is the message of your baptism—that you are God's child, and that God's will and wish is that you should grow up to become His son, to serve Him lovingly, trustingly, manfully; and that He can and will give you the power to do so; ay, He has given you the power already, *if* you will but claim and use it. But you must claim and use it, because you are meant not merely to be God's

wilful, ignorant, selfish child, obeying Him from fear of the rod, but to be His willing, loving, loyal son.

National Sermons.

God is not a tyrant who must be appeased with gifts, or a task-master who must be satisfied with the labour of his slaves. He is a Father, who loves His children, who gives and loveth to give, who gives to all freely, and upbraideth not. He truly willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live. His will is a good will, and howsoever much men's sin and folly may resist it, and seem for a time to mar it, yet He is too great and good to owe any man, even the worst, the smallest spite or grudge. Patiently, nobly, magnanimously, God waits—waits for the man who is a

fool, to find out his folly; waits for the heart which has tried to find pleasure in everything else, to find out that everything else disappoints, and to come back to Him, that fountain of all wholesome pleasure, that well-spring of all life fit for a man to live. When the fool finds out his folly; when the wilful man gives up his wilfulness; when the rebel submits himself to law; when the son comes back to his father's house—there is no sternness, no upbraiding, no revenge; but the everlasting and boundless love of God wells forth again as ever. The Creator has condescended to wait for His creature, because what He wanted was not His creature's fear, but His creature's love; not his lip-obedience, but his heart; because He wanted him not to come back as a trembling slave to his

master, but as a son who has found out at last what a father he has left him, when all beside has played him false. Let him come back thus, to find all is forgiven; and to hear the Father say, "This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

Discipline and other Sermons.

When the tempest comes; when affliction, fear, anxiety, shame come, then the Cross of Christ begins to mean something to us. For then in our misery and confusion we look up to heaven and ask, Is there any One in heaven who understands all this? Does God understand my trouble? Does God feel for my trouble? Does God care for my trouble? Does God know what trouble means? Or must I fight the battle of life alone,

without sympathy or help from God, who made me and has put me here? Then, does the Cross of Christ bring a message to our heart such as no other thing or being on earth can bring. For it says to us, God does understand thee utterly; for Christ understands thee. Christ feels for thee; Christ feels with thee; Christ has suffered for thee, and suffered with thee. Thou canst go through nothing which Christ has not gone through. He, the Son of God, endured poverty, fear, shame, agony, death for thee, that He might be touched with the feeling of thine infirmity and help thee to endure, and bring thee safe through all to victory and peace.

Westminster Sermons.

Though we, happily, no longer believe in the terror by night, which of old was

thought to come from witches, ghosts, demons, yet there is a terror by night in which we must believe, for it comes to us from God, and should be listened to as the voice of God, even that terror about our own sinfulness, folly, weakness, which comes to us in dreams and sleepless nights. We may learn from these night fancies and night thoughts; for they are often God's message to us, calling us to repentance and amendment of life. They are often God's Book of Judgment, wherein our sins are written, which God is setting before us, and showing us the things we have done. God sends dreams to men which enable them to look back, and recollect things past, which they had forgot only too easily; and these humble and penitential dreams are God's warning that (as the

Article says) the infection of nature doth remain even in those who are regenerate, and that nothing but the continual help of God's Spirit will keep us from falling back or falling away.

Discipline and other Sermons.

The religion of terror is the most superficial of all religions. God's arbitrary will and almighty power may seem dark by themselves though deep, as they do to the Calvinists, because they do not involve His moral character. Join them with the fact that He is a God of mercy as well as justice, remember that His essence is love, and the thunder cloud will blaze with dewy gold, full of soft rain and pure light. All the deep things of God are bright, for God is light.

Letters and Memories.

I am not, and will not (please God to help me, as He has hitherto) be anxious about anything. Why should we weary out the little life we have left in us, when He has promised to care for us, and make us renew our youth, and heap us with everything that is good for us?

And as for our difficulties. Has it not been fulfilled in them — As thy day so shall thy strength be? Have they not been God's sending? God's way of preventing the cup of bliss being over sweet? and consider, have they not been blessed lessons? Have we not had in all things with the temptation a way to escape? So out of evil God brings good; or rather out of necessity He brings strength. The highest spiritual training is contained in the most paltry physical accidents; and

the meanest actual want may be the means of calling into actual life the possible but sleeping embryo of the very noblest faculties.

This is a great mystery; but we are animals, in time and space; and by time and space, and our animal natures, are we educated. Therefore let us be only patient, patient; and let God our Father teach His own lesson, His own way. Let us try to learn it well, and learn it quickly; but do not let us fancy that He will ring the school bell, and send us to play before our lesson is learnt.

Letters and Memories.

In all the events of life pray, pray take what God does *not* send as *not* good for us, and trust Him to send us what is good. Remember all these things are right, and

come with a reason, and a purpose, and a meaning; and he who grumbles at them believeth not (for the time being at least) in the Living God.

Ah! do not fancy that I am not often perplexed—"Cast down, yet not in despair." No; Christ reigns, as Luther used to say—and therefore I will not fear, "though the mountains be removed (and I with them) and cast into the midst of the sea."

Letters and Memories.

All these anxieties will be good for you. They all go to the making of a man—calling out that God-dependence in him which is the only true self-dependence, the only true strength. Well said old Hezekiah, "Lord, by all *these* things men live (by trouble, sorrow, sick-

ness), and in these things is the life of the spirit."

MS. Letters.

Our Lord said, "Take no thought for the morrow; the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Matt. vi. 34. And do we not find that our Lord's words are true? Who are the people who get through most work in their lives, with the least wear and tear? Are they the anxious people? Those who imagine to themselves possible misfortunes, and ask continually, What if this happened, or if that? How should I be able to get through such and such a trouble? Far, far from it. Let us not waste the strength which God has given us for to-day in vain fears or vain dreams about to-morrow. To-day is quite

full enough of anxiety and care. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof, and sufficient for the day is the good thereof. To-day, and to-morrow too, may end very differently from what we *hope*. Yes. But they may end very differently from what we *fear*. Look not too far ahead, lest you see what is coming before you are ready for the sight. If we foresaw the troubles that are coming, perhaps it would break our hearts; and if we foresaw the happiness which is coming, perhaps it would turn our heads. Let us not meddle with the future but refrain our souls and keep them low, like little children, content with the day's food, and the day's schooling, and the day's play-hours, sure that the Divine Master knows all that is right, and how to train us, and whither to lead us, though we

know not, and need not know, save this, that the path by which He is leading each of us—if we will but obey and follow, step by step—leads up to Everlasting Life.

All Saints-Day Sermons.

IV.

OUT OF THE DEEP

OF

LONELINESS, FAILURE,

AND

DISAPPOINTMENT.

My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass. I am even as a sparrow that sitteth alone on the house-top.—Ps. cii. 4, 6.

My lovers and friends hast Thou put away from me, and hid mine acquaintance out of my sight- Ps. lxxviii. 18.

I looked on my right hand, and saw there was no man that would know me. I had no place to flee unto, and no man cared for my soul. I cried unto Thee, O Lord, and said, Thou art my Hope. When my spirit was in heaviness, then Thou knewest my path. – Ps. cxlii. 4, 5.

Gracious is the Lord, and righteous , yea, our God is merciful. I was in misery, and He helped me. Ps. cxvi. 5, 6.

IV.

OUT OF THE DEEP

OF

LONELINESS, FAILURE,

AND

DISAPPOINTMENT.

It is sorrow—sorrow and failure—which forces men to believe that there is One who heareth prayer, forces them to lift up their eyes to One from whom cometh their help. Before the terrible realities of danger, death, disappointment, shame, ruin—and most of all before deserved shame, deserved ruin—all arguments melt away; and the man or woman, who was but too ready a day before to say, "Tush, God

will never see and will never hear," begins to hope passionately that God does see, that God does hear. In the hour of darkness, when there is no comfort nor help in man, when he has no place to flee unto, and no man careth for his soul, then the most awful, if most blessed of all questions is, But is there no One higher than man to whom I can flee? No One higher than man who cares for my soul, and for the souls of those who are dearer to me than my own soul? No friend? No helper? No deliverer? No counsellor? Even no judge? No punisher? No God, even though He be a consuming fire? Am I in my misery alone in the universe? Is my misery without any meaning and without hope? If there be no God, then all that is left for me is despair and death. But

if there be, then I can hope that there is a meaning in my misery; that it comes to me not without cause, even though that cause be my own fault. Then I can plead with God, even though in wild words like Job; and ask, What is the meaning of this sorrow? What have I done? What should I do? I will say unto God, "Do not condemn me; show me wherefore Thou contendest with me. Surely I would speak unto the Almighty; I desire to reason with God." Oh, my friends, a man, I believe, can gain courage and wisdom to say that only by the inspiration of the Spirit of God. But when once he has said that from his heart, he begins to be justified by faith; for he has had faith in God. He has trusted God—and more—he has justified God. He has confessed that God is not a mere force or

law of Nature; nor a mere tyrant and tormentor; but a Reasonable Being who will hear reason, and a Just Being who will do justice by the creatures He has made.

Westminster Sermons.

The deeper, the bitterer your loneliness, the more you are like Him who cried upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" He knows what that grief, too, is like. *He* feels for thee at least. Though all forsake thee, He is with thee still, and if He be with thee, what matter who has left thee for a while? Ay, blessed are those that weep now, for whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth; and because He loves the poor, He brings them low. All things are blessed now but sin; for all things excepting sin are redeemed

by the life and death of the Son of God. Blessed are wisdom and courage, joy and health, and beauty and love and marriage, childhood and manhood, corn and wine, fruits and flowers; for Christ redeemed them by His life. And blessed, too, are tears and shame, blessed are weakness and ugliness, blessed are agony and sickness, blessed the sad remembrance of our sins, and a broken heart and a repentant spirit. Blessed is death, and blest the unknown realms, where souls await the resurrection day, for Christ redeemed them by His death. Blessed are all things, weak as well as strong. Blessed are all days, dark as well as bright, for all are His, and He is ours; and all are ours, and we are His for ever.

Therefore sigh on, ye sad ones, and rejoice in your own sadness; ache on, ye

suffering ones, and rejoice in your own sorrows. Rejoice that you are made free of the holy brotherhood of mourners; rejoice that you are counted worthy of a fellowship in the sufferings of the Son of God. Rejoice and trust on, for after sorrow shall come joy. Trust on; for in man's weakness God's strength shall be made perfect. Trust on; for death is the gate of life. Endure on to the end, and possess your souls in patience for a little while, and that, perhaps, a very little while. Death comes swiftly, and more swiftly still perhaps, the day of the Lord. The deeper the sorrow, the nearer the salvation :—

> The night is darkest before the dawn ;
> When the pain is sorest, the child is born ;
> And the day of the Lord at hand.
>
> *National Sermons.*

Thou who art weary and heavy laden; thou who fanciest at moments that the Lord's arm is shortened that it cannot save, and art ready to cry, God hath forgotten me, take comfort, and look upon Christ. Thou wilt never be sure of the love of God, unless thou rememberest that it is the same as the love of Christ; and by looking at Christ, learnest to know thy Father and His Father, whose likeness and image He is, and see that the Spirit which proceeds alike from both of them is the Spirit of humanity and love, which cannot help going forth to seek and to save thee, simply because thou art lost. Look, I say, unto Christ; and be sure that what the good Samaritan did to the wounded traveller, that same will He do to thee,

because He is the Son of Man, human and humane.

Art thou robbed, wounded, deserted, left to die, worsted in the battle of life, and fallen in its rugged road, with no counsel, no strength, no hope, no purpose left? Then remember that there is One walking to and fro in this world unseen, but ever present, whose form is as the form of the Son of Man. And He has time, as He has will, to turn aside and minister to such as thee! No human being so mean, no human sorrow so petty, but that He has the time and the will and the power to have mercy on it, because He is the Son of Man. Therefore He will turn aside even to thee, whoever thou art, who art weary and heavy laden, and can find no rest for thy soul, at the very moment, and in the

very manner which is best for thee. When thou hast suffered long enough, He will stablish, strengthen, settle thee. He will bind up thy wounds, and pour in the oil and the wine of His Spirit—the Holy Ghost, the Comforter—and will carry thee to His own inn, whereof it is written, "He will hide thee secretly in His own presence from the provoking of men; He will keep thee in His tabernacle from the strife of tongues. He will give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways;" and He will give thee rest at last in the bosom of the Father, from which thou, like all human souls, camest forth at first, and to which thou shalt at last return, with all human souls who have in them the Spirit of God and of Christ, and of eternal life.

Discipline and other Sermons.

We all like comfort. But what kind of comfort do we not merely like, but need? Merely to be comfortable? To be free from fear, anxiety, sorrow? The comfort which poor human beings want in such a world as this is not the comfort of ease, but the comfort of strength. The comforter whom we need is not one who will merely say kind things, but give help—help to the weary, lonely, heavy-laden heart which has no time to rest. We need not the sunny and smiling face, but the strong helping arm. For we may be in that state that smiles are shocking to us, and mere kindness—though we may be grateful for it—of no more comfort to us than sweet music to a drowning man. We may be miserable, and unable to help being miserable, and unwilling to help it too. We

do not wish to flee from our sorrow: we do not wish to forget it. We dare not. It is so awful, so heart-rending, so plain-spoken, that God, the master and tutor of our hearts, must wish us to face it and endure it. Our Father has given us the cup—shall we not drink it? Oh! for a comforter who will help us to drink the bitter cup—who will give us faith to say, with Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him"—who will give us the firm reason to look steadily at our grief, and learn the lesson it is meant to teach—who will give us the temperate will to keep sober and calm amid the shocks and changes of mortal life! If we had such a comforter as that, we should not care if he seemed at times stern, as well as kind; we could endure rebuke from him if we could only

get from him wisdom to understand the rebuke, and courage to bear the chastisement. Where is that comforter? God answers: That Comforter am I, the God of Heaven and Earth. There are comforters on earth who can help thee with wise words and noble counsels, can be strong as man and tender as woman. But God can be more strong than man, more tender than woman likewise; and when the strong arm of man supports thee no longer, yet under thee are the Everlasting Arms.

All Saints-Day Sermons.

. . . You are disappointed. Do remember if you lose heart about your work, that none of it is *lost*. That the good of every good deed remains, and breeds, and works on for ever; and that all

that fails and is lost is the outside shell of the thing, which perhaps might have been better done, but better or worse has nothing to do with the real spiritual good which you have done to men's hearts, for which God will surely repay you in His own way and time.

Letters and Memories.

Don't be downhearted if outward humiliation, disappointment, failure, come at first. If God be indeed our Father in any real sense, then whom He loveth He chasteneth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth. And "till thou art emptied of thyself, God cannot fill thee," though it be a law of the old Mystics, is true and practical common sense. Go thy way, though the way to true light is a long ladder.

Letters and Memories.

As for any schemes of mine, it is a slight matter whether they have failed or not. But the failure of a hundred schemes would not alter my conviction that they are attempts in a right direction; and I will die in hope, not having received the promises, but beholding them afar off, and confessing myself a stranger and a pilgrim.

So I am content to have failed. I have learnt in the experiment priceless truths concerning myself, my fellow-men, and the City of God, which is eternal in the heavens, for ever coming down among men, and actualizing itself more and more in every succeeding age.

Letters and Memories.

We have hope in Christ for the next life as well as for this—hope that in

the next life He will give us power to succeed where we failed here; that He will enable us to be good and to do good, and, if not to make others good (for there we trust all will be good together), to enjoy the fulness of that pleasure for which we have been longing on earth—the pleasure of seeing others good, as Christ is good and perfect, as their Father in Heaven is perfect.

All Saints-Day Sermons.

There are many who have in them, by grace of God, the divine thirst for the higher life; who are discontented with themselves, ashamed of themselves; who are tormented by longings which they cannot satisfy, instincts which they cannot analyse, powers which they cannot employ, duties which they cannot perform, doctrinal confusions which they cannot unravel; who

would welcome any change, even the most tremendous, which would make them nobler, purer, juster, more loving, more useful, more clear-hearted and sound-minded; and, when they think of death, say with the poet—

> 'Tis life, not death, for which I pant,
> 'Tis life whereof my nerves are scant,
> More life, and fuller, that I want.

To them we can say, for God has said it long ago—Be of good cheer. The calling and gifts of God are without repentance. If you have the divine thirst, it will be surely satisfied. If you long to be better men and women, you will surely be so. Only be true to those higher instincts; only do not learn to despise and quench that divine thirst; only struggle on, in spite of mistakes, of failures, even of sins,

for every one of which last your Heavenly Father will chastise you, even while He forgives; in spite of all disappointment struggle on. Blessed are you who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for you shall be filled. To you, and not in vain, "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst, Come. And whosoever will, let him drink of the water of life freely."

Water of Life—Sermons.

The heart and soul of man wants more than "a religion," as it is written, "My soul is athirst for God, even the Living God." They want a living God, who cares for men, forgives men, saves men from their sins; and Him I have found in the Bible, and nowhere else, save in the facts of life, which the Bible alone interprets.

Letters and Memories.

What was Christ's life? Not one of deep speculation, quiet thoughts, and bright visions; but a life of fighting against evil; earnest, awful prayers and struggles within, continual labour of body and mind without; insult and danger and confusion and violent exertion and bitter sorrow. This was Christ's life—this is the life of almost every good and great man I ever heard of. This was Christ's cup, which His disciples were to drink of as well as He; this was the baptism of fire with which they were to be baptised of as well as He; this was to be their fight of faith; this was the tribulation through which they, and all other great saints, were to enter into the kingdom of heaven. For it is certain that the harder a man fights against evil the harder evil will fight against him in return; but it

is certain too that the harder a man fights against evil, the more is he like his Saviour Christ, and the more glorious will be his reward in heaven.

Village Sermons.

V.

OUT OF THE DEEP

OF

DOUBT, DARKNESS, AND HELL.

O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night unto Thee. Oh! let my prayer enter into Thy presence. For my soul is full of trouble and my life draweth nigh unto Hell. Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in a place of darkness, and in the deep.—Ps. lxxxviii. 1, 2.

If I go down to Hell, Thou art there also. Yea, the darkness is no darkness with Thee; but the night is as clear as the day.—Ps. cxxxix. 7, 11.

I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my calling. He brought me also out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon the rock. And He hath put a new song into my mouth, even a thanksgiving unto our God.—Ps. xl. 2, 3.

God hath delivered my soul from the place of Hell. He shall receive me.—Ps. xlix. 15.

V.

OUT OF THE DEEP

OF

DOUBT, DARKNESS, AND HELL.

It is sometimes true, that sunshine comes after storm. Sometimes true—or who could live?—but not always. Equally true that in most human lives there are periods of trouble, blow following blow, wave following wave, from opposite and unexpected quarters, till all God's billows have gone over the soul. How paltry and helpless in such dark times are all proud attempts to hang self-poised in the centre of the abyss, and there organise for oneself a character by means of circumstances. Easy

enough it seems for a man to educate himself without God while he lies comfortably in idleness on a sofa. But what if he found himself hurled perforce among the real universal experiences of humanity; and made free in spite of himself, by doubt and fear and horror of great darkness, of the brotherhood of woe, common alike to the simplest peasant woman, and to every great soul, who has left his impress upon the hearts of after generations? Jew, Heathen, or Christian; men of the most opposite creeds and aims—whether it be Moses or Socrates, Isaiah or Epictetus, Augustine or Mohammed, Dante or Bernard, Shakespeare or Bacon—each and all of them have this one fact in common—that once in their lives, at least, they have gone down into the bottomless pit, and

there out of the utter darkness have asked the question of all questions—"Is there a God? and if there be, what is He doing with me?" What refuge then — when a man feels himself powerless in the gripe of some unseen and inevitable power, and knows not whether it be chance or necessity, or a devouring fiend — to wrap himself sternly in himself and cry, "I will endure though all the universe be against me"? How fine it sounds! But who has done it? No, there is but one escape, one chink through which we may see light, one rock on which our feet may find standing-place, even in the abyss; and that is the belief, intuitive, inspired, due neither to reasoning nor to study, that the billows are God's billows; and that though we go down into Hell,

He is there also; the belief that not we, but He, is educating us; that these seemingly incoherent miseries, storm following earthquake, and earthquake fire, as if the caprice of all the demons were let loose against us, have in His mind a spiritual coherence, an organic unity and purpose, though we see it not; that these sorrows do not come singly, only because He is making short work with our spirits; and because the more effect He sees produced by one blow, the more swiftly He follows it up by another; till in one great and varied crisis, seemingly long to us, but short compared with immortality, our spirits may be—

> "Heated hot with burning fears,
> And bathed in baths of hissing tears,
> And battered with the strokes of doom,
> To shape and use."

There is no darker temptation than that which comes over a man when the devil whispers to him such thoughts as these, "God does not care for me—God hates me. Luck, and everything else is against me. There seems some curse upon me. Why should I change? Let God first change to me and then will I change towards Him. But God will not change; He has determined to have no mercy on me. I can see that; for everything goes wrong with me. Then what is the use of my repenting. I will go my own way—and what must be must." Have you ever had such thoughts? Then hear the word of the Lord to you: "When, whensoever, wheresoever, the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness which he has committed, and

doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Have I any pleasure in the death of him that dieth saith the Lord, and not rather that he should be converted and live?" Never believe the devil when he tells you that God hates you. Never believe him when he tells you that God has been too hard upon you, and placed you in such circumstances of temptation, ignorance, poverty or anything else, that you cannot mend. What does the promise of your Baptism say? "Be you poor, tempted, ignorant, stupid, be you what you will, you are God's child—your Father's love is over you, His mercy ready for you." You feel too weak to change. Ask God's Spirit to give you a strength of will you never felt before. You feel too proud to

change. Ask God's Spirit to humble your proud heart, to soften your hard heart; and you will find to your surprise that when your pride is gone, when you are utterly ashamed of yourself, and see your sins in their true blackness, and feel unworthy to look up to God, that then will come a nobler, holier, manlier feeling—self-respect, and a clear conscience, and the thought that, weak and simple as you are, you are in the right way; that God and the Angels of God are smiling on you; that you are in tune again with all earth and heaven, because you are what God wills you to be. Not His proud, peevish, self-willed child, fancying yourself strong enough to go alone, when you are really the slave of your own passions and appetites and

the playthings of the devil; but His loving, loyal son through the strength of God, and able to do what you will, because what you will God wills also.

National Sermons.

To escape atheism and despair, let us remember that the Creator and Ordainer of the circumstances of life is not chance or Nature, but the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and of us.

When you feel you are in the deepest and gloomiest doubt, pray the prayer of desperation; cry out, "Lord, if Thou dost exist, let me know that Thou dost exist! Guide my mind by a way that I know not into Thy truth," and God will deliver you.

Letters and Memories.

Sad as your letter was, it gave me pleasure; for it is always a pleasure to see life springing out of death, health returning after disease, though, as doctors know, the recovery from asphyxia or drowning is always as painful as the temporary death itself was painless. Faith is born of doubt. "It is not life, but death, where nothing stirs." Take all these doubts and struggles of yours as simply so many signs that your Father in heaven is treating you as a father, that He has not forsaken you, is not offended with you, but is teaching you in the way best suited to your own idiosyncracy, the great lesson of lessons, "Empty thyself and God will fill thee." Take your sorrows to your Father in heaven. If that name Father mean anything, it must mean that He will not

turn away from His wandering child in a way that you would be ashamed to turn away from yours. If there be pity, lasting affection, patience in man, they must have come from God. They above all things must be His likeness. Believe that He possesses them a million times more fully than any human being.

St. Paul knew well at least the state of mind in which you are. He said that he had found a panacea for it. And his words, to judge from the way in which they have taken root and spread and conquered, must have some depth and life in them. Why not try them? Just read the first nine chapters of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, taking for granted that they mean the simplest and most obvious sense which can be put upon them. *Letters and Memories.*

When the hour of temptation comes, go back, go back if you would escape, to what you were taught at your mother's knee concerning the grace of God; for that alone will keep you safe, or angel, or archangel, or any created being safe, in this life, and in all lives to come.

Sermons on David.

What does it all mean? I cry. Night and day the heavens have been black to me. You may think it sinful to have such thoughts. My experience is that when they come, one must do battle with them; one must face them; do battle with them deliberately; be patient if they worst one for a while. By all such things men live; in these is the life of the spirit. Only by going down into hell can one rise the third day. I have been in hell many times in my

life, therefore, perhaps, I have had some small power of influencing human hearts. But I never have looked hell so close in the face as I have been doing of late. Wherefore, I hope thereby to get fresh power to rise and to lift others heavenward.

I can only cry—"O Lord, in Thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded. Wherefore should the wicked say—Where is now his God?" But while I fret most there comes to me an inner voice, saying—"What matter if *thou* art confounded. *God is not.* Only believe firmly that God is as good as thou with thy finite reason canst conceive; and He will make thee at last able to conceive how good He is, and thou shalt have the perfect blessing of seeing God." You will say I am inconsistent. So I am; and so, if read honestly, are

David's Psalms. Yet, that very inconsistency is what brings them home to every human heart for ever. The words of a man in real doubt and real darkness, crying for light, and not crying in vain, as I trust I shall not.

. . . I only know that I know nothing, but hope that Christ, who is the Son of Man, will tell me piecemeal, if I be patient and watchful, what I am and what man is.

Letters and Memories.

Some things I see clearly, and hold with desperate clutch—a Father in Heaven for all; a Son of God incarnate for all (that incarnation is the one fact which is to me worth all, because it makes all others possible and rational, and without it I should go mad); and a Spirit of the Father

and the Son, the fountain of all good on earth—who works to will and to do of His own good pleasure—in whom? In every human being in whom there is one spark of active good, the least desire to do right, or to be of use. Beyond that I see little save that Right is divine and all-conquering—Wrong utterly infernal, and yet weak, foolish, a mere bullying phantom, which will flee at each brave blow, had we courage to strike at it in God's name.

Letters and Memories.

There is not a sorrow which man can taste which Jesus Christ has not fulfilled. He filled the cup of misery to the brim, and drained it to the dregs. He tasted death for every man, and went down into the lowest depths of terror and shame and agony and death, and, worst of all, into the feeling that

God had forsaken Him; that there was no help or hope for Him in heaven, as well as earth; in a word, He went down into hell; even into that lowest darkness where, for one moment, a man feels, that God is nothing to him, and he is nothing to God. Even into that depth Jesus condescended to go down for us. That worst of all temptations, of which David only tasted a drop, when he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—Jesus drained to the very dregs for us. He went down into hell for us, and conquered hell and death, and the darkness of the unknown world, and rose again glorious from them, that He might teach us not to fear death and hell; that He might know how to comfort us in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment,

when on our sick-bed, or in some bitter shame and trouble, the lying devil is telling us that we are damned and lost, and forsaken by God, and every sin we ever did rises up and stares us in the face.

National Sermons.

Whatever may be the mysteries of life and death, there is one mystery which the Cross of Christ reveals to us, and that is the infinite and absolute goodness of God. Let all the rest remain a mystery so long as the mystery of the Cross of Christ gives us faith for all the rest. Faith, I say. The mystery of evil, of terror, of death, the gospel does not pretend to solve, but it tells us that the mystery is proved to be soluble; for God Himself has taken upon Himself the task of solving it; and Christ has proved

by His own act, that if there be evil in the world, it is none of His, for He hates it, fights against it, and He fought against it to the death. The Cross says, Have faith in God. Ask no more of Him, "Why hast thou made me thus?" Ask no more, "Why do the wicked prosper on the earth?" Ask no more, "Whence pain and death, war and famine, earthquake and tempest, and all the ills to which flesh is heir?" All fruitless questioning, all peevish repinings are precluded henceforth by the death and passion of Christ.

Dost thou suffer? Thou canst not suffer more than the Son of God. Dost thou sympathise with thy fellow-sufferers? Thou canst not sympathise more than the Son of God. Dost thou long to right them, to

deliver them, even at the price of thine own blood? Thou canst not long more ardently than the Son of God, who carried His longing into act, and died for them and thee. What if the end be not yet? What if evil still endure? What if the medicine have not yet conquered the disease? Have patience, have faith, have hope, as thou standest at the foot of Christ's Cross, and holdest fast to it, as the Anchor of thy soul and reason, as well as of thy heart. For however ill the world may go, or seem to go, the Cross is the everlasting token that God so loved the world, that He spared not His only begotten Son, but freely gave Him for it. Whatsoever else is doubtful this at least is sure, that God must conquer, because God is good; that Evil must

perish, because God hates Evil, even to the death.

Westminster Sermons.

How shall the bottomless pit, if we fall into it, be a pathway to the everlasting rock? David tells us, "Out of the deep have I cried unto Thee, O God." He cried to God—not to himself, his own learning, prudence, talents—to pull him out of that pit. Not to doctrines, books, church-goings—not to the dearest earthly friend—not to his own experiences, faith's assurances, frames and feelings. The matter was too terrible to be plastered over in that way, or in any way. He was face to face with God alone, and in utter weakness, in utter nakedness of soul, *he cried to God Himself.* There was the lesson. God took away from him all

things, that he might have no one to cry to but to God.

And it shall be with every soul of man who, being in the deep, cries out of the deep to God, as it was with Moses when he went up alone into the Mount of God, and fasted forty days and forty nights amid the earthquake and the thunderstorm, and the rocks which melted before the Lord. And behold, when it was past, he talked face to face with God, as a man talketh with his friend, and his countenance shone with heavenly light, when he came down triumphant out of the Mount of God.

Good News of God—Sermons.

On the torturing cross Christ prayed for His murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And

this is the character many a man may get in the dark deep. To feel for all, to feel with all; to rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep, to understand people's trials and make allowances for their temptations; to put oneself in their place till we see with their eyes, and feel with their hearts, till we judge no man, and have hope for all; to be fair and patient and tender with everyone we meet; to despise no one, despair of no one, because Christ despises none and despairs of none; to look on every one we meet with love, almost with pity, because they too may have been down into the deep of horror, or may go down into it any day; to see our own sins in the sins of others, to feel that we might do what they do, and

feel as they feel at any moment, did God desert us; to give and forgive, live and let live, even as Christ gives to us and forgives us, and lives for us and lets us live in spite of all our sins.

Good News of God.

Rejoice that there is a fire of God the Father whose name is Love, burning for ever unquenchably, to destroy out of every man's heart and out of the hearts of all nations, and of the physical and moral world, all which offends and makes a lie; and that into that fire the Son will surely cast all shams, lies, hypocrisies, tyrannies, false doctrines. Is it not good news that *that* fire is unquenchable, that *that* worm will not die? The fire may be kindled for us—the worm may seize our hearts. God grant that in that day we may have courage

to let the fire and the worm do their work —to say to Christ, "These too are Thine, and out of Thine infinite love they have come. Thou requirest truth in the inward parts, and I will thank Thee for any means, however bitter, which Thou usest to make me true. I want to be an honest man and a right man! And, O joy! Thou wantest me to be so also. O joy! that though I long cowardly to quench Thy fire, I cannot do it. Purge me therefore, O Lord, though it be with fire. Burn up the chaff of vanity and self-indulgence, of hasty prejudices, second-hand dogmas,—husks which do not feed my soul, with which I cannot be content, of which I feel ashamed daily—and if there be any grains of wheat in me, any word or thought or power of action which

may be of use as seed for my nation after me, gather it, O Lord, into Thy garner." Amen.

Letters and Memories.

The Fire of God hardens a man and softens him at the same time. He comes out of it hardened to that hardness of which it is written, "Do thou endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ;" and again, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my course;"—yet softened to that softness of which it is written, "Be ye tenderhearted, compassionate, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you;" and again, "We have a High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, seeing that He has been tempted in all things like as we are."

Happy, thrice happy, are they who have thus walked through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and found it a path that leads to everlasting life. Happy are they who have writhed awhile in the fierce fire of God, and have had burned out of them the chaff, and the dross, and all which offends and makes them vain and light, yet makes them dull, and drags them down at the same time; till only the pure gold of God's righteousness is left, seven times tried in the fire, incorruptible, precious in the sight of God and man. Such need not regret, will not regret, all that they have gone through. It has made them brave, sober, patient. It has given them

> The reason firm, the temperate will,
> Endurance, foresight, strength and skill;

and so shaped them into the likeness of

Christ, who was made perfect by suffering; and though He were a Son, yet in the days of His flesh made strong supplication, and crying with tears to His Father, and was heard in that He feared; and so, though He died on the Cross and descended into Hell, yet triumphed over Death and Hell by dying and descending, and conquered them by submitting to them.

Good News of God—Sermons.

VI.

OUT OF THE DEEP OF DEATH.

My heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death has fallen upon me.—Ps. iv. 4.

My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart.—Ps. lxiii. 25.

Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.—Ps. xxiii. 4.

Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.—Ps. cxvi. 8.

VI.

OUT OF THE DEEP OF DEATH.

WHAT will become of us after we die? What will the next world be like? What is heaven like? Shall I be able to enjoy it? Shall I be a man there, or only a ghost, a spirit without a body?

To this St. Paul answers, that Christ, the Son of God, after that He was manifested in the flesh, was received up into glory. He does not tell us what heaven is like, for though he had been caught up into the third heaven, yet what he saw there was unspeakable. Neither does he

tell us what the next life will be like; all he says is, the Man Christ Jesus, who walked this earth like other men, was received up into glory, and He did not leave His man's mind, His man's heart, even His man's body behind Him. He carried up into heaven with Him His whole manhood, spirit, soul, and body, even to the print of the nails in His hands, and in His most holy feet, and the wound of the spear in His most holy side. That is enough for us; because the Man Christ Jesus is in heaven, we, as men, may ascend to heaven. Where He is we shall be. And what He is, in as far as He is Man, we shall be. And this we do know, that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

National Sermons.

Men are afraid of dying, principally, I believe, because they fear the unknown. It is not that they are afraid of the pain of dying. It is not that they are afraid of going to hell. Neither is it that they are afraid of not going to heaven. But when they think of actually *dying*, they feel as if to go into the next world was to be turned out into the dark night, into an unknown land, away from house and home, and all they have known and loved; and so they shrink from death.

All Saints-Day Sermons.

When you are in terror, trouble, and affliction, ay! and in the black jaws of death, and know not where to turn, that blessed thought, "Christ is risen from the dead," will be a shield and a strength to you which no other thought can give.

The Lord is risen—a man, with His man's body, and His man's spirit, His human love and tenderness; He has taken them all up to Heaven with Him. He is a man still, though He is very God of very God, He rose from the dead as a man, and therefore He can understand me and feel for me still—now—here in England in the nineteenth century just as much as He could when He was walking upon earth in Judea of old.

When this world is vanishing from our eyes, and we are going we know not whither, leaving behind us all we know, and love, and understand; then the thought of all thoughts—"Christ is risen from the dead" is the only one which will save us from sad, dark thoughts, from fear and despair, or from stupid carelessness, and the death

of a brute beast, such as too many die. "Christ is risen and I shall rise. Christ has conquered death for Himself, and He will conquer it for me. Christ took His man's body and soul with Him from the tomb to God's right hand; and He will raise my body and soul at the last day, that I may be with Him for ever, and see Him where He is." In life and in death this is the only thing which will save us from sin, from terror, from the dread of the hereafter.

National Sermons.

Why did he die, we ask? There must be a final cause, a purpose for each death of every son of man, or the fact would be altogether hideous—a scribble without a meaning—a skeleton without a soul. Why did he die? "I became dumb, I opened

not my mouth; for it was Thy doing." So says the Burial Psalm. So let us say likewise. "I became dumb:" not with rage, not with despair; but because it was Thy doing, and therefore it was done well. It was the deed, not of chance, nor of necessity. Not so. For it was the deed of the Father, without whom a sparrow falls not to the ground; of the Son who died upon the Cross in the utterness of His desire to save; of the Holy Ghost, who is the Lord and Giver of Life to all created things. It was the deed of One who delights in Life and not in Death; in bliss and not in woe; in light and not in darkness; in order and not in anarchy; in good and not in evil. It had a final cause, a meaning, a purpose; and that purpose is very good. What it is, we know not; and we need

not know To guess at it would be indeed to meddle with matters too high for us. So let us be dumb. Dumb, not from despair, but from faith; dumb, not like a wretch weary with calling for help which does not come, but dumb like a child sitting at its mother's feet, and looking up into her face and watching her doings, understanding none of them as yet, but certain that they are all done in love.

Westminster Sermons.

Christ is risen! What a thought was that for the blessed martyrs, for poor creatures in the agony of fear and shame, expecting presently to be torn to pieces or burnt alive. "Death, this horrible death, cannot conquer me, weak and fearful as I am, for my Lord and Master,

for whom I am going to suffer, has conquered death, and He will not let it conquer me. He is stronger than hell and death, and He will not suffer me in my last hour, for any pains of death, to fall from Him. He is King of Heaven and Earth, and He will care for His own." What comfort to be able to say: "Ay, I am torn from wife and child and all which I love on earth; but not for ever, not for ever; for Christ rose from the dead, and I, who belong to Christ, shall rise as He did. This poor flesh of mine may be burnt in flames, devoured by ravenous beasts. What matter? Christ the King of men has risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. That same Spirit which brought back His body from the grave and hell, will bring my body also from the grave and hell,

to a nobler, happier life with Him in joy unspeakable, where Christ now sits on God's right hand defending me, pitying me, and blessing me, holding out to me a crown of glory which shall never fade away."

National Sermons.

These things are most bitter,* and the only comfort that I can see in them is, that they are bringing us all face to face with the realities of human life, as it has been in all ages, and giving us sterner and yet more loving, more human, and more divine thoughts about ourselves, and our business here, and the fate of those who are gone, and awakening us out of the luxurious, frivolous, unreal dream (full, nevertheless, of hard judgments) in which we have been

* Deaths on the battlefield.

living so long, to trust in a Living Father, who is really and practically governing this world and all worlds, and who willeth that none should perish; and therefore has not forgotten or suddenly begun to hate and torment one single poor soul which is past out of this life into some other. All are in our Father's hands; and, oh! blessed thought, though they "go down into hell, Thou art there also."

Letters and Memories.

Jesus is the Saviour, the Deliverer, the great Physician, the healer of soul and body. Not a pang is felt, or a tear shed on earth, but He sorrows over it. Not a human being on earth dies young but He, as I believe, sorrows over it. What is it which prevents Him healing every sickness, soothing every sorrow, wiping away

every tear now, we cannot tell. But this we *can* tell, that it is His will that none should perish. This we *can* tell, that He is willing as ever to heal the sick, to cleanse the leper, to cast out devils, to teach the ignorant, to bind up the broken-hearted. This we *can* tell, that He will go on doing so more and more, year by year, and age by age. This we *can* tell, from Scripture, that Christ is stronger than the devil. This we *can* tell, that Christ and all good men, the spirits of just men made perfect, the wise and the great in God's sight, who have left us their books, their sayings, their writings, as precious health-giving heir-looms, have been fighting, and are fighting, and will fight to the end, against the devil, and sin, and oppression, and misery, and disease, and everything which spoils and darkens

the face of God's good earth. And this we *can* tell, that they will conquer at the last, because Christ is stronger than the devil; good is stronger than evil; light is stronger than darkness; God's Spirit, the giver of life and health and order, is stronger than all the evil customs and carelessness and cruelty and superstition which make miserable the lives, and, as far as we can see, destroy the souls of thousands. Yes; I say Christ's kingdom is a kingdom of health and deliverance for body and soul; and it will conquer, and it will spread, and it will grow, till the nations of the world have become the kingdoms of God and of His Christ. Christ reigns, and will reign, till He has put all enemies under His feet, and the last of His enemies which shall be destroyed is Death. Death is His

enemy which He has conquered by rising from the dead; and the day will come when Death will be no more—when sickness and sorrow shall be unknown, and God shall wipe tears from all eyes. I say it again—never forget it—Christ is King, and His kingdom is a kingdom of health, of life and deliverance from all evil. It always has been so from the first time our Lord cured the leper in Galilee; it will be so to the end of the world.

National Sermons.

What did the spiritual glory of Christ's countenance at His transfiguration show His disciples, but that He was a spiritual King, whose strength lay in the spirit of power, and wisdom, and beauty, and love, which God had given Him without measure; and that there was such a thing as

a spiritual body—such a body as each of us some day shall have if we be found in Christ at the resurrection of the just—a body which shall not hide a man's spirit as it does here, when it becomes subject to the wear and tear of life, and disease, and decay; but a spiritual body—a body which shall be filled with our spirits, which shall be perfectly obedient to our spirits—a body through which the glory of our spirits shall shine out, as the glory of Christ's spirit shone out through His in the transfiguration. "Brethren, we know not what we shall be, but this we do know, that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

Village Sermons.

I believe, says the Creed, in the Resurrection of the Flesh. The Bible teaches us

to believe, that we, each of us, as human beings, men and women, shall have our share in that glorious day; not merely as ghosts, disembodied spirits (of which the Bible, thanks be to God, says little or nothing), but as real live human beings, with new bodies of our own, on a new earth, under a new heaven. Therefore, says David, my flesh shall rest in hope; not merely my soul, my ghost, but my flesh. For the Lord, who not only died, but rose again with His body, shall raise our bodies, according to the mighty working by which He subdues all things to Himself; and then the whole manhood of each of us, body, soul, and spirit, shall have our perfect consummation and bliss in His eternal and everlasting glory. That is our hope.

National Sermons.

Those who die in the fear of God and in the faith of Christ do not really taste of death; to them there is no death, but only a change of place, a change of state; they pass at once into some new life, with all their powers, all their feelings, unchanged; still the same living, thinking, active beings which they were here on earth. . . . Rest they may—rest they will, if they need rest. But what is their rest? Not idleness, but peace of mind. To rest from sin, from sorrow, from fear, from doubt, from care; this is true rest. Above all, to rest from the worst weariness of all—knowing one's duty, and not being able to do it. That is true rest—the rest of God, who works for ever, and is at rest for ever; as the stars over our heads move for ever, thousands of miles a day, and yet are at

perfect rest, because they move orderly, harmoniously, fulfilling the law which God has given them. Perfect rest, in perfect work; that surely is the rest of blessed spirits, till the final consummation of all things, when Christ shall have made up the number of His elect. And if it be so, what comfort for us who must die, what comfort for us who have seen others die, if death be but a new birth into some higher life; if all that it changes in us is our body--the mere husk and shell of us—such a change as comes over the snake when he casts his old skin, and comes out fresh and gay, or even the crawling caterpillar, which breaks its prison, and spreads its wings to the sun as a fair butterfly? Where is the sting of death then, if death can sting, and poison, and corrupt nothing

of us for which our friends love us; nothing of us with which we could do service to men or God? Where is the victory of the grave, if so far from the grave holding us down, it frees us from the very thing which does hold us down—the mortal body?

Water of Life—Sermons.

Consider the lilies of the field. We must take our Lord's words exactly. He is speaking of the lilies, the bulbous plants which spring into flower in countless thousands every spring over the downs of Eastern lands. All the winter they are dead, unsightly roots, hidden in the earth. But no sooner does the sun of spring shine upon their graves, than they rise into sudden life and beauty, as it pleases God, and every seed takes its own peculiar body. Sown in corruption, they are raised in

incorruption; sown in weakness, they are raised in power; sown in dishonour, they are raised in glory; delicate, beautiful in colour, perfuming the air with fragrance; types of immortality, fit for the crowns of angels.

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. For even so is the Resurrection of the dead. Yes, not without a divine providence—yea, a divine inspiration—has the blessed Eastertide been fixed, by the Church of all ages, as the season when the earth shakes off her winter's sleep; when the birds come back, and the flowers begin to bloom, when every seed which falls into the ground and dies, and rises again with a new body, is a witness to us of the Resurrection of Christ; and a witness, too, that we shall rise again; that in us, as

in it, life shall conquer death; when every bird that comes back to sing and build among us, every flower that blows, is a witness to us of the Resurrection of the Lord and of our Resurrection. . . . They obey the call of the Lord, the Giver of Life, when they return to life, as a type and a token to us of Christ their Maker, who was dead and is alive again, who was lost in hell on Easter eve, and was found again in heaven for evermore. And so the resurrection of the earth from her winter's sleep, commemorates to us, as each blessed Eastertide comes round, the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and is a witness to us that some day life shall conquer death, light conquer darkness, righteousness conquer sin, joy conquer grief; when the whole creation, which groaneth and travaileth in

pain until now, shall have brought forth that of which it travaileth in labour—even the new heavens and the new earth, wherein shall be neither sighing nor sorrow, but God shall wipe away tears from all eyes.

Discipline and other Sermons.

Death is not death if it kills no part of us save that which hindered us from perfect life. Death is not death, if it raises us in a moment from darkness into light, from weakness into strength, from sinfulness into holiness. Death is not death, if it brings us nearer to Christ who is the fount of life. Death is not death, if it perfects our faith by sight, and lets us behold Him in whom we have believed. Death is not death, if it gives us to those whom we have loved and lost, for whom we have lived, for whom

we long to live again. Death is not death, if it joins the child to the mother who was gone before. Death is not death, if it takes away from that mother for ever all a mother's anxieties, a mother's fears, and lets her see, in the gracious countenance of her Saviour, a sure and certain pledge that those whom she has left behind are safe, safe with Christ and in Christ, through all the chances and dangers of this mortal life. Death is not death, if it rids us of doubt and fear, of chance and change, of space and time, and all which space and time bring forth, and then destroy. Death is not death; for Christ has conquered death for Himself, and for those who trust in Him.

Water of Life—Sermons.

Out of God's boundless bosom, the fount of life, we came; through selfish, stormy youth and contrite tears—just not too late; through manhood not altogether useless; through slow and chill old age, we return from Whence we came; to the Bosom of God once more—to go forth again, it may be, with fresh knowledge, and fresh powers, to nobler work. Amen.

Essays.

VII.

PRAYER OUT OF THE DEEP.

Hear my prayer, O God ; and hide not Thyself from my petition. Take heed unto me and hear me ; how I mourn in my prayer and am vexed.—Psalm iv. 1, 2.

In my trouble I will call upon the Lord, and complain unto my God ; so shall He hear my voice out of His holy temple, and my complaint shall come before Him ; it shall enter even into His ears.—Ps. xviii. 5, 6.

The Lord is nigh unto them that call upon Him ; He also will hear their cry, and will help them.—Psalm cxlv. 18, 19.

In the day when I cried Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.—Psalm cxxxviii. 3.

VII.

PRAYER OUT OF THE DEEP.

THE older I grow, and the more I see of the chances and changes of this mortal life, and of the needs and longings of the human heart, the more important seems this question: Is there anywhere in the universe any being who can hear our prayers? Is prayer a superfluous folly, or the highest prudence? I say: Is there a being who can ever hear our prayers? I do not say a being who will always answer them, and give us all we ask; but one who will at least hear, who will listen, consider what is

fit to be granted or not, and grant or refuse accordingly ?

Is that strange instinct of worship which rises in the heart of man as soon as he begins to think, to become a civilized being and not a savage, to be disregarded as a childish dream when he rises to a higher civilization still ? Is the experience of men, heathen as well as Christian, for all these ages to go for nought ? Has every utterance that has ever gone up from suffering and doubting humanity gone up in vain ? Have the prayers of saints, the hymns of psalmists, the agonies of martyrs, the aspirations of poets, the thoughts of sages, the cries of the oppressed, the pleadings of the mother for her child, the maiden praying in her chamber for her lover upon the distant battle-field, the soldier answering her prayer

from afar off with "Keep quiet, I am in God's hands"—those very utterances of humanity which seemed to us most noble, most pure, most beautiful, most divine—been all in vain? Mere impertinences, the babblings of fair dreams, poured forth into no where, to no thing, and in vain? Has every suffering, searching soul which ever gazed up into the darkness of the unknown, in hopes of catching even a glimpse of a divine Eye, beholding all, and ordering all, and pitying all, gazed up in vain? Oh! my friends, those who believe, or fancy they believe, such things, and can preach such doctrines without pity and sorrow, know not of what they rob a mankind already but too miserable by its own folly and its own sin—a mankind which if it have not hope in God and in Christ, is truly, as

Homer said of old, more miserable than the beasts of the field.

Westminster Sermons.

When the human heart asks, Have we not only a God in Heaven, but a Father in Heaven? that question can only be answered by our Lord Jesus Christ. Truly He said, "No one cometh unto the Father but by Me. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath revealed Him." And therefore we can find boundless comfort in the words, "Such as the Father is, such is the Son and such the Holy Ghost." For now we know that there is A MAN in the midst of the throne who is the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person—a high priest who can be touched by the feeling of our infirmities, seeing He was tempted in

all things like as we are. To Him we can cry with human passion and in human words, because we know that His human heart will respond to our human hearts, and that His human heart again will respond to His Divine Spirit, and that His Divine Spirit is the same as the Divine Spirit of His Father, for their wills and minds are One, and their will and their mind is boundless love to sinful men.

Yes, we can look up in our extreme need by faith into the sacred face of Christ, and by faith take refuge within His sacred heart, saying, If it be good for me, He will give what I ask; and if He gives it not, it is because that too is good for me, and for others beside me. In all the chances and changes of this mortal life we can say to Him, as He said in that supreme hour—

"If it be possible let this cup pass from Me, nevertheless not My will but Thine be done;" sure that He will present that prayer to His Father and to our Father, and to His God and our God; and that whatsoever be the answer vouchsafed by Him whose ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts, the prayer will not have gone up to Christ in vain.

Westminster Sermons.

I have been praying long and earnestly, and have no fears now. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, *believing*, ye shall receive." "Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief." Those two texts were my stronghold when the night of misery was most utterly dark, and in the strength of them we shall prevail. Fret not

then, neither be anxious; what God intends He will do.

Letters and Memories.

The longer I live the more I see that the Lord's Prayer is the pattern of all prayers; and whether it be consistent with that to ask that God should alter the course of the universe in the same breath that we say, "Thy will be done on earth"—judge you. I do not object to praying for special things. God forbid! I do it myself. I cannot help doing it any more than a child in the dark can help calling for its mother. Only it seems to me, that when we pray, "Grant this day that we run into no kind of danger," we ought to lay our stress on the "run," rather than on the "danger"; and ask God not to take away the danger by altering the course

of nature, but to give us light and guidance whereby to avoid it.

Letters and Memories.

Pray night and day very quietly, like a little, weary child, for everything you want, in body as well as in soul—the least thing as well as the greatest—nothing is too much to ask God for—nothing too great for Him to grant—and try to thank Him for everything. Glory be to thee, O God!

Letters and Memories.

When you are in the deep—whatever that depth be—cry to God: to God Himself, and none but God. If you can go to the pure fountain-head, why drink of the stream, which must have gathered something of defilement as it flows? If you can go to God Himself, why go to any of

God's creatures, however holy, pure, and loving? Go to God, who is light of light, life of life. From Him all goodness flows.

Go then to Him Himself. Out of the deep, however deep, cry unto God, unto God Himself. If David the Jew of old could do so, much more we who are baptized into Christ; much more can we who have access by one Spirit unto the Father; much more can we who, if we know who we are and where we are, should come boldly to the Throne of Grace, to find mercy and grace to help us in the time of need. Hath He promised, and shall He not do it? To every one of you — however weak, however ignorant, aye, however sinful, if you desire to be delivered from those sins—this grace is given; liberty to cry out of the depth to

God Himself, who made sun and stars, all heaven and earth; liberty to stand face to face with the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and cling to the One Being who can never fail nor change, even to the One immortal, eternal God.

Westminster Sermons.

The seed which we sow—the seed of repentance, the seed of humility, the seed of sorrowful prayers for help—shall take root and grow and bring forth fruit, we know not how, in the good time of God who cannot change. We may be sad—we may be weary; our eyes may wait and watch for the Lord more than they who watch for the morning; but it must be as those who watch for the morning, for the morning which must and will come; for the sun will surely rise, and the day will surely

dawn, and the Saviour will surely deliver those who cry unto Him.

Westminster Sermons.

For the poor soul who is abased, who is down, and in the depth; who feels his own weakness, folly, ignorance, sinfulness, and out of the deep cries unto God as a lost child crying after its father—even as a lost lamb bleating after the ewe—of that poor soul, be his prayers never so confused, stupid, and ill expressed—of him it is written: "The Lord helpeth them that fall; He is nigh unto all that call upon Him; He will fulfil the desire of those that fear Him; He also will hear their cry, and will help them."

Westminster Sermons.

PRAYERS AND CONFESSIONS

FOR PARDON AND LIKENESS TO GOD.

O Lamb eternal, beyond all place and time! O Lamb of God, slain eternally before the foundation of the world! O Lamb that liest slain eternally in the midst of the throne of God! Let the blood of life, which flows from Thee, procure me pardon for the past; let the water of life, which flows from Thee, give me strength for the future. I come to cast away my own life, my life of self and selfishness, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, that I may live it no more, and to receive Thy life, which is created after the likeness of

God, in righteousness and true holiness, that I may live it for ever and ever, and find it a well of life springing up in me to everlasting life. Eternal Goodness, make me good like Thee. Eternal Wisdom, make me wise like Thee. Eternal Justice, make me just like Thee. Eternal Love, make me loving like Thee. Amen.

FOR LIGHT.

O Lord! Love who embracest the universe, Light who lightest every man that comes into the world, take away from me all darkness of soul and hardness of heart. Fill me with Thy light, that I may see all things in light. Fill me with Thy love, that I may love all things which Thou hast made. Amen.

Come to us, O Lord! open the eyes of our souls, and show us the things which belong to our peace and the path of life, that we may see that, though all man's inventions and plans come to an end, yet Thy commandment is exceedingly broad—broad enough for rich and poor, for scholar, tradesman, and labourer, for our prosperity in this life and our salvation in the life to come. Amen.

FOR TRUE GLORY.

O God, quench in us all which is selfish, idle, mean, and quicken to life in us all which is God-like and for God, that so we may attain at last to the true glory, the glory which comes, not from selfish ambition, not from selfish pride, not from selfish ease, but from getting rid of sel-

fishness in all its shapes—the glory which Christ alone has in perfection—the glory before which every knee will one day bow whether in earth or heaven—even the glory of doing our duty, regardless of what it costs us, in the station to which each of us has been called by his Father in Heaven.

Amen.

FOR HOLINESS.

O Lord Jesus Christ! Exalt me with Thee so to know the mystery of life, that I may use the earthly as the appointed expression and type of the heavenly; and by using to Thy glory the natural body, I may be fit to be exalted to the use of the spiritual body. Amen.

FOR PURITY AND GOODNESS.

Purge Thou me, O Lord, or I shall never be pure; wash Thou me, and then

alone shall I be clean. For Thou requirest not frames or feelings, not pride and self-conceit, but truth in the inward parts; and wilt make me to understand wisdom secretly.

O God, Thou art good, and I am bad; and for that very reason I come. I come to be made good. I adore Thy goodness, and I long to copy it: but I cannot unless Thou helpest me. Purge me. Make me clean. Cleanse me from my secret faults, and give me truth in the inward parts. Do what Thou wilt with me. Train me as Thou wilt. Punish me if it be necessary. Only make me good. Amen.

Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts. Shut not Thy merciful ears to our prayer; but spare us, O Lord, most holy! O God, most mighty! Thou worthy Judge

Eternal, and suffer us not, for any temptation of the world, the flesh, or the devil, to fall from Thee. I, Lord, am I: and what I am—a very poor, pitiful, sinful person. But Thou, Lord, art Thou; and what Thou art—Perfect! Thou art Goodness itself. And therefore Thou canst, and Thou wilt, make me what I ought to be at last, a good person. To Thee I can bring the burden of this undying I, which I carry with me, too often in shame and sadness. I ask Thee to help me to bear it. Guide me, teach me, strengthen me, till I become such as Thou wouldst have me be: pure and gentle, truthful and high-minded, brave and able, courteous and generous, dutiful and useful like Thy Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRAYER AGAINST BEING CONFOUNDED.

O Lord, I am oppressed, crushed—the heart is beaten out of me. I have nothing to say for myself. Undertake for me. O Lord, confound me not. I know I am weak, ignorant, unsuccessful; full of faults and failings, which make me ashamed of myself every day of my life. I have gone astray, like a sheep that is lost. But seek Thy servant, O Lord, for I do not forget Thy commandments. I am trying to learn my duty. I am trying to do my duty. I have stuck unto Thy testimonies. O Lord, have mercy and confound me not. Man may confound me. But do not Thou of Thy mercy and pity, O Lord. Let me not find when I die, or before I die, that all my labour has been in vain; that I am not wiser, not more useful after all. Let not

my gray hairs go down with sorrow to the grave. Let me not die with the miserable thought that in spite of all my struggles to do my duty, my life has been a failure and I a fool. Let me not wake in the next life, to be utterly confounded: to find that I was all wrong, and have nothing left but disappointment and confusion of face. O Lord, who didst endure all shame for me, save me from that most utter shame. Thou art good and just. Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell. O God, in Thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded. Amen.

FOR PEACE OF MIND.

O Father, grant me Thy peace. I have not a peaceful spirit in me; and I know that I shall never get it by think-

ing, and reading, and understanding, for it passes all that; and peace lies far away beyond it, in the very essence of Thine undivided, unmoved, absolute, Eternal Godhead, which no change nor decay of this created world, nor sin or folly of men or devils, can ever alter; but which abideth for ever what it is, in perfect rest, and perfect power, and perfect love. Soothe this restless, greedy, fretful soul of mine, as a mother soothes a sick and feverish child. How Thou wilt do it I do not know. It passes all understanding. But though the sick child cannot reach the mother, the mother is at hand and can reach it. And Thou art more than a mother: Thou art the Everlasting Father. Though the eagle by flying cannot reach the sun, yet the sun is at hand, and can reach all the

earth, and pour its light and warmth over all things. Thou art more than the sun; Thou art the Light and Life of all things. Pour Thy Light and Thy Life over me, that I may see as Thou seest, and live as Thou livest, and be at peace with myself and all the world, as Thou art at peace with Thyself and all the world. Pour Thy love over me, that I may love as Thou lovest. Again, I say, I know not how, for it passes all understanding; but I hope that Thou wilt do it for me, I trust that Thou wilt do it for me, for I believe that Thou art Love, and that Thy mercy is over all Thy works. I believe that Thou so lovest the world that Thou hast sent Thy Son to save the world and me. I know not how, for that too passes understanding; but I believe that Thou wilt do it, for I believe that

Thou art Love, and that Thy mercy is over all Thy works, even over me. I believe that Thy will is peace on earth, even peace to me, restless and unquiet as I am, and goodwill to all men, even to me, the chief of sinners. Amen.

PRAYER BEFORE HOLY COMMUNION.

O blessed Jesus! Saviour, who agonized for us! God Almighty, who didst make Thyself weak for the love of us! Oh, write that love upon our hearts so deeply that neither pleasure nor sorrow, life nor death may wipe it away! Thou hast sacrificed Thyself for us; oh, give us hearts to sacrifice ourselves for Thee! Thou art the Vine, we are the branches. Let Thy priceless blood, shed for us on the cross, flow like life-giving sap through all our

hearts and minds, and fill us with Thy righteousness, that we may be sacrifices fit for Thee. Stir us up to offer to Thee, O Lord, our bodies, our souls, our spirits; and in all we love and all we learn, in all we plan and all we do, to offer ourselves, our labours, our pleasures, our sorrows, to Thee; to work for Thy kingdom, to live as those who are not their own, but bought with Thy blood, fed with Thy body; and enable us now, in Thy most Holy Sacrament, to offer to Thee our repentance, our prayers, our praises, living, reasonable, and spiritual sacrifices—Thine from our birth-hour — Thine now, and Thine for ever! Amen.

CONFESSION OF SIN.

Father, I have sinned against Thee, and am not worthy to be called Thy child; but

I come to Thee. Father, I hate myself; but Thou lovest me. I do not understand myself; but Thou dost, and Thou wilt be merciful to the work of Thine own hands. I cannot guide and help myself, but Thou canst help me, and Thou wilt too, because Thou art my Father, and nothing can part me from Thy love, or from the love of Thy Son, my King. I come and claim my share in Thee, just because I have nothing, and can bring Thee nothing, but lie at Thy gate as a beggar full of sores, desiring to be fed with the crumbs from Thy table. And if I would help the wretched, how much more wilt Thou help me. Thy name is Love, and Thy glory is the likeness of Thy Son Jesus Christ, who said, "Come to me, all ye that are weary and

heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." Amen.

CONFESSION OF WEAKNESS.

O God my Father, I am Thine; save me, for I have sought Thy commandments. I am Thine—not merely Thy creature, O God—the very birds, and bees, and flowers are that; and do their duty far better than I—God forgive me—do mine.

I am Thine—not merely Thy child—but I am Thy school child. O Lord Jesus Christ, I claim Thy help as my schoolmaster, as well as my Lord and Saviour. I am the least of Thy school children; and it may

be the most ignorant and stupid. I do not pretend to be a scholar, a divine, a philosopher, a saint. I am a very weak, insufficient scholar, sitting on the lowest form in Thy great school-house, which is the whole world, and trying to spell out the mere letters of Thy alphabet, in hope that hereafter I may be able to make out whole words and whole sentences of Thy commandments, and having learnt them, to do them. If Thou wilt but teach me Thy statutes, O Lord, then I will try to keep them to the end; for I long to be on Thy side, and about Thy work. I long to help, be it ever so little, in making myself better, and my neighbour better. I long to be useful, and not useless; a fruit-bearing tree, and not a noxious weed in Thy garden; and therefore I pray that Thou wilt not

cut me down or root me up, nor let foul creatures trample me under foot.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord, in my trouble, for the sake of the truth which I long to learn, and for the good which I long to do. Poor weak plant though I may be, I am still a plant of Thy planting, which is struggling to grow, and flower, and bear fruit to eternal life; and Thou wilt not despise the work of Thine own hands, O Lord, who died that I might live? Thou wilt not let me perish! I have stuck unto Thy testimonies. O Lord, confound me not! Amen.

CONFESSION OF ONE IN CONFUSION OF SPIRIT.

O God, Thou knowest, and Thou alone, how far I am right, and how far wrong.

I leave myself in Thy hand, certain that Thou wilt deal fairly, justly, lovingly with me, as a Father with his son. I do not pretend to be better than I am; neither will I pretend to be worse than I am. Truly I know nothing about it. I, ignorant human being that I am, can never fully know how far I am right, and how far wrong. I find light and darkness fighting together in my heart, and I cannot divide between them. But Thou, Lord, canst. Thou knowest. Thou hast made me; Thou lovest me; Thou hast sent Thy Son into the world to make me what I ought to be. Thou willest not that I should perish, but come to the knowledge of the truth; and therefore I believe that I shall not perish, but come to the knowledge of the truth about Thee, about my own character, my

own duty, about everything which it is needful for me to know. Therefore, O Lord, I will go boldly on, doing my duty as well as I can, though not perfectly, day by day; and asking Thee day by day to feed my soul with daily bread. Thou feedest my body with daily bread. How much more wilt Thou feed my mind and my heart, more precious by far than my body. Lord, I will trust Thee for soul and body alike; and if I need correcting for my sins, I know this, at least, that the worst thing that can happen to me, or to any man, is to do wrong and not to be corrected; and the best thing is to be set right, even by hard blows, as often as I stray out of the way. Therefore, O Lord, I will take my punishment quietly and manfully, and try to thank Thee for it,

as I ought; for I know that Thou wilt not punish me beyond what I deserve, but far below what I deserve. I know Thou wilt punish me only to bring me to myself, and to correct me, and purge me, and strengthen me. I believe, O Lord, on the warrant of Thine own word I believe it—undeserved as the honour is, that Thou art my Father, and lovest me; Thou dost not afflict any man willingly, or grieve the children of men out of passion or out of spite. Thou willest not that I, or any man, should perish; but Thou willest have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, for Jesus Christ His sake. Amen.

CONFESSION OF A TORMENTED SOUL.

O Lord, I am in misery—my soul is sore troubled—for I have sinned, and I

confess that I only receive the due reward of my deeds. I have earned my shame, I have earned my sorrow; Lord, I have deserved it all. I look back on wasted time and wasted powers. I look round on ruined health, ruined fortune, ruined hopes; I confess that I deserve it all. But Thou hast endured more than this for me, and Thou hast done nothing amiss. For me Thou didst suffer, for me Thou hast been crucified, and me Thou hast been trying to save all through the years of my vanity. Perhaps I have not wearied out Thy love, perhaps I have not conquered Thy patience. I will take the blessed chance. I will still cast myself upon Thy love. O Lord, I have deserved all my misery. Yet, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. Amen.

Father! not our will but Thine be done. All things come from Thy hand, and therefore all things come from Thy love. We have received good from Thy hand, and shall we not receive evil? Though Thou slay us, yet will we trust in Thee. For Thou art gracious and merciful, long-suffering and of great goodness. Thou art loving to every man, and Thy mercy is over all Thy works. Thou art righteous in all Thy ways, and holy in all Thy doings. Thou art nigh unto them that call upon Thee. Thou wilt hear their cry, and wilt help them; for all Thou desirest, when Thou sendest trouble on us, is to make us wiser and better. And that Thou canst only make us by teaching us the knowledge of Thyself. Glory be to Thee, O God! Amen.

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